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THE  
CORNHILL MAGAZINE.

MARCH 1921.

*THE SALT BLOOD OF ENGLAND.*

BY BENNET COPPLESTONE.

PART III.

THE SOVEREIGNTY OF THE ENGLISH SEA.

It was one thing for the English kings, with the aid of a privileged maritime militia based upon the old Cinque Ports, to maintain control of the Narrows—the neck of the Channel bottle—but it was quite another, in the absence of a permanent fighting force, to command the wide ‘English Sea.’ For the claim assumed by the First Edward to ‘sovereign lordship of the Sea of England and of the isles within the same’ involved for its assertion in permanence a superior striking force capable of defeating any enemy at any time anywhere between the Narrows and the little town of Craudon on the Point du Raz at the extreme western end of Brittany. Such a superior force never existed in permanence, and the continuous attempts to manufacture it by general requisition, embargo, and impressment upon the ports and their maritime populations, brought ruin upon that English mercantile marine which was the main fount of naval strength.

Naval history is very much more than a picturesque story of sea battles. The battles are merely incidents; that which happens between the battles is of much greater importance. That which lies behind unseen is of greater importance still—the national conception of, or indifference towards, the naval idea; the system under which the fleets are provided, made ready, manned, and trained; the moral inspiration of the national mind which gives to it the energy and endurance to carry through to its end a political purpose.

The success and the failure of a great fighting sovereign, Edward III, to maintain the sovereignty of the English Sea, both seem now to us to have been inevitable. His early success on that

day, when impelled by his fiery spirit the English ships broke through the quadruple French lines at Sluys—broke through and over them, though French ship had been chained to French ship in massive continuity. His other day of success, too, when off Winchelsea in personal command of an English squadron, he overwhelmed the Spaniards though their ships were both bigger and better than his own. We see, especially in that second fight (*Les Espagnols sur Mer*), how in face of every physical disadvantage English sailors and soldiers will fight and conquer when they have Edward the Thirds or Black Princes to lead them. Both Edward and his son that day, with their ships riven and sinking under them, each boarded and captured an enemy vessel and 'transferred their flags.' Edward's early successes were inevitable, and continued for so long as he had an unspent, unspoiled succession of English ships and men ready to hand. But when he had used them up, then came failure, in its turn as inevitable as the earlier successes. As the long periods of active hostilities dragged on, the ports declined and the privately owned ships went out of business. Merchants could not trade, for their ships were almost continually under embargo—forbidden by royal decree to leave harbour—or under requisition to make up the King's fleets. The men of the ports from the Thames to Northumberland, and from Kent to Cornwall, were perpetually under impressment by admirals of the northern and southern coasts. Trade had little opportunity to revive between the spasms of naval activity. And so the people's ships, without whose aid the few King's galleys and cogs were helpless—they could not even be manned except by impressment upon the ports—the people's ships rotted away. Before Edward, once hailed as 'King of the Sea,' had followed his great fighting bull of a son to the grave, the end had come to his sovereignty of the English Sea. The complete defeat of *La Rochelle* did no more than place a big black full stop to a chapter in our naval story which had already closed.

In this fourteenth century of which we write, we are still in the Personal Era. Wars were made by kings for their own purposes, supported by knights and nobles who fought that they might win glory for their families and gain wealth for their purses out of ransomed prisoners. Peace was no more than a fleeting truce, a period of uneasy armistice. The nation had no say one way or another, for war or for peace. The Hundred Years' War with France began in 1337 because King Edward set up a personal

aggressive claim to the French throne. The Parliament of the day obsequiously supported him, though with the thoroughly English stipulation that the thrones of France and England should remain distinct and separate. But even the Parliament of those days washed its hands of naval affairs. It would give aids to the King in men and money for his invasion of France, but held that the sea was none of its business. Upon the King personally rested that handsome claim to maritime sovereignty, and upon the ports, exposed to maritime assault, must rest the responsibility for defence. Let the King and the ports look to the matter. It is true that from time to time, under pressure of urgency, Parliament did grant naval aids in money of tenths and fifteenths, but at no time did Parliament display spontaneous interest in the English Sea. One may doubt if many English men and women outside of the maritime counties had ever seen or heard of the English Sea. One did not in those days spend summer holidays on the coast. The knights and nobles and men-at-arms fought willingly enough when thrust on shipboard and ranged alongside an enemy, but they fought as soldiers, not as sailors. Those who commanded fleets at sea were almost always men of high rank, 'great men,' on the principle laid down in a Council Minute of about 1345, that 'no one can chastise and rule them unless he be a great man.' The indifference of Parliament towards the sea service, the indifference of the inland counties and of all who were not actually professional seafarers, the indifference of the 'King of the Sea' himself to everything which went to the maintenance of a privately owned maritime force—he would promise to redress grievances and then pass on in truly royal forgetfulness—make his long reign a melancholy chapter in our sea history. We cannot, when we survey the dark background and the pitiful ending to the Third Edward's sovereignty of the English Sea, regard a couple of brilliant battles as more than flaming patches intensifying the gloom of it all.

More interest has been taken in the claim to sovereignty of the English Sea than in the failure of successive kings to maintain it. John, for whom history has few good words, John of whom Green pleasantly quotes the verdict of contemporary Churchmen: 'Foul as it is, Hell itself is defiled by the fouler presence of John,' this poor hunted devil of a John shares with Alfred the high honour of an attempt to organise a regular naval establishment. These two men, alike only in consummate ability and alertness of mind,

were driven to the sea by their hard failures on land. John, stripped of Normandy, perceived that he had no chance of recovering his overseas possessions unless at least he could hold the sea approaches. He established Keepers of the Royal Ships and Keepers of the Ports; under him the organisation of the Cinque Ports reached its highest level of efficiency; his ships defeated and captured the French fleet at Damme; and shortly after his death Hubert de Burgh, his Governor of Dover, fought and won that battle of the Straits which was in its way as decisive in results as Trafalgar. John has a secure place in naval history, but the claim that he, first of English kings, ordained that foreign vessels should, upon challenge made, strike their sails within the Narrow Seas in acknowledgment of his sovereignty, cannot be allowed. This ordinance of maritime sovereignty is stated to have been delivered at Hastings in the year 1200, but Nicolas, who has explored the evidence, declines to accept its validity. But valid or invalid, the disputed ordinance of John matters little. A claim to sovereignty which cannot be enforced establishes no more than the folly of the claimant. It was not until a hundred years later that the sovereignty of the English Sea from the Straits to Craudon was indubitably claimed and indubitably recognised—by the Flemings. The French never recognised it, and have never to this day recognised it. The English Sea, which has become known to us as the English Channel, is still named by the French, *La Manche*, without an adjective of possession.

The sea forces, like the land forces, were controlled absolutely by the King in Council. Edward the Third, a man of immense personal energy and personal ambition, dominated while in his prime all military and naval policy. When age sapped his vigour, the romantic figure of his heir, the Black Prince, carried on the fatal design of war to exhaustion against France, and incidentally against Spain. It was a struggle in which England, a small country with not half the population of either France or Spain, was bound ultimately to be the loser. To the north was Scotland, of which the aggression of earlier English kings had made an implacable enemy. By herself Scotland could achieve little, but allied with France she was an ever-present danger which could not be neglected. The passion for war which burned in the hearts of the King and his entourage of knights and nobles was so compelling that they appear to have rejoiced in an abundance of enemies. The more numerous the foes the smaller the prospect of a dull and boring

peace. And so among them they bled our poor England white. In the middle of it all the flaming sword of the Destroying Angel swept through the land, turning the fields of England, and of Europe too, into one vast untended cemetery. Men called that visitation the Black Death.

Let us peg out a few dates in that fourteenth century in order that our minds may have some facts to cling to. Edward III began his reign in 1327 as a boy of fourteen. Ten years later his personal claim to the throne of France caused the outbreak of the Hundred Years' War. In 1340 the French fleet was swept off the seas at Sluys. In August 1346 was won the battle of Crécy, and in August 1347, after a siege and blockade of twelve months, Calais fell to the English. The Scots, who broke in upon an England denuded of troops for the campaign of Crécy, were routed at Neville's Cross. During ten years Edward had waged war with great apparent success. But in the summer of 1348 the plague, which has always been endemic in the Far East, swept from China across Europe, and appeared in Dorset. During the winter the pestilence reached London and the Midlands, and when the leaves broke out upon the trees in spring, half the men, women, and children of England lay dead. There were not men enough left alive to bury the dead. A small people of about four millions had been reduced to two millions in little more than six months. So dreadful a visitation cooled the fighting spirit of even kings, knights, and nobles, and a truce was called with France. Spain seized the opportunity to make free with the English Narrows, but her principal squadron was completely captured or dispersed by King Edward and the Black Prince off Winchelsea (*Les Espagnols sur Mer*, 1350). For five years thereafter, exhausted Europe enjoyed a brief respite. Then the Black Prince, carrying on the French claim of his royal father, raided France, gained the battle of Poitiers, seized King John and brought him to England. The French, ravaged by war, the plague, and by the peasants' revolt known as the Jacquerie, were unwilling or unable to ransom their monarch, who died at the Savoy Palace in London. The Peace of Bretigny (1360) endured for nine years, and then our poor England was at war again with both France and Spain. By 1374 King Edward and the Black Prince were both worn out and dying, their sea forces had been captured at La Rochelle in 1372, and their land forces, under John of Gaunt, had been scattered in 1373. Nothing remained of their vast possessions in France except

Calais, Bordeaux, and Bayonne. Their lordship of the English Sea had become a mockery. That was the end of a period in our history which had been called glorious.

The issue of the land campaigns depended upon the sea—as always in our history—and during the hundred and twenty years or so which elapsed between the death of King John and the outbreak of the Third Edward's wars, the sea forces available to an English monarch had developed very considerably. The many-oared King's galley still remained as a formidable fighting ship at a time when all sea battles were at close quarters, but the 'capital ship' of the fourteenth century was the cog. Bluff-bowed, round-bellied, a weight-carrier, the cog was the direct descendant of the despised busses, the 'mere merchant ships' of King Richard's Mediterranean expedition of the closing twelfth century. The ocean-going round ship, born of the deep-water ports of the west, was rising towards pre-eminence, and the ancient long-ship was declining towards insignificance. Perhaps we should more correctly say that the long-ship, incapable of development, remained what it always had been, and so had fallen behind in the race for utility. The Cinque Ports, its natural home, still used it, though even these old ports were accepting the more efficient cog. The bewildering lists of ship names of the period—the vissiers, the crayers, the hoc-boats, the pickards, the shutes and so on—need not cause us worry if we bear firmly in mind the three main divisions in ship design—round ships, long ships, and galleys. Vessels of types which lay within these main classes varied greatly in size among themselves, according to the purpose for which they were designed, but the classes were distinct. A galley, propelled sometimes by as many as eighty oars, and occasionally two-masted, was a fighting ship and nothing besides. A round ship, whether large as a cog or small as a barge, was essentially a privately owned deep-sea trader, equipped for war with fore, after, and top castles. The long ship was a small coasting trader and fishing boat, also privately owned, to which were added soldiers and castles when called up for war.

The cog, the 'capital ship,' measured about two hundred tons as an average, though one hears of vessels of three hundred tons. The famous cog *Christopher*, captured by the French and flaunted by her captors in the front line at Sluys—whence she was torn forth and recaptured by the English—was by all accounts of exceptional size. The English cogs, though they prevailed against

the Spanish caracks at Les Espagnols sur Mer, were by general admission inferior to the Spanish ships in size, strength, and beauty. The English were late starters in the race for ship design. Nicolas says that the cogs carried about sixty-five seamen to every hundred tons of burthen, and when in fighting trim had added some fifty soldiers and archers to every hundred mariners. If these figures are correct, the ship of more than one hundred tons must have been rare in Edward's squadrons. For the blockade of Calais in 1347 there were called up 710 ships and 14,151 seamen, which works out at less than twenty men per ship. We should not have expected a higher average than this for the 105 small ships of the Cinque Ports, but the big cogs from Portsmouth, Southampton, Dartmouth, and Bristol should have pulled up the figure. One must conclude that the greater number of vessels in this blockading squadron were very small craft—mosquito craft. The capital ships were needed elsewhere, for Spaniards and Genoese, in addition to the French, were roaming freely about the English Sea.

Could we see them now, the cogs of Sluys and of Les Espagnols sur Mer would seem unhandy craft, detestable to live in. The one mast was taller and the single squaresail was bigger than in the busses of King Richard, but in design and use they were little changed. The cog could sail no nearer the wind than the busse, no nearer than the Viking long-ship of five hundred years earlier. It could vary the spread of its one sail by means of 'bonnets' laced upon the main course; there were no reef bands and were not to be any until the days of the Stuarts. There had, however, arrived one tremendous innovation—the rudder. We do not know precisely when the simple idea of a rudder, hung by pintles upon gudgeons in the stern post and steered inboard by a tiller, first broke upon men's minds. But somewhen about 1300 the rudder came and, what is most remarkable, came complete in every detail. In principle it is unchanged to this day. In means of manipulation there have been great developments, but the rudder of the modern battleship is in all essentials the rudder of the cog. Go down to the Thames side and look at a barge, the first that trails by, and you will see the rudder and tiller almost exactly as they were born into the world of mariners. Decks had come into being, and half-decks fore and aft, with scarcely four feet of headroom, distressingly uncomfortable. A cabin was a royal luxury, erected first for a queen and later for the 'great men' who commanded fleets. There was no space for comfort in the line-of-battle ships of the fourteenth

century. Officers and seamen, soldiers and archers, were packed between decks, or sheltered from rain and surf under the close half-decks, where to rise suddenly from sleep meant a broken pate. None but the hardiest of men could long survive in a sea voyage of those days. And then, and for hundreds of years afterwards, they were days of recurrent plague. Voyages in northern waters were short, and campaigning seasons were short; they had to be. We can understand why in the more gracious Mediterranean maritime development outstripped the slow progress of the bitter English Sea.

The unhandy cogs, which could sail on a wind but could not point into it, brought down sailing tactics to elemental simplicity. The one English manœuvre, stoutly held to, was to reach far out for the windward position, swoop down on an enemy, and grapple him with hooks of steel. Sea fights were in essence land fights—soldiers' battles. The ships in close contact hurled stones and arrows from their fighting tops, and poured steel-clad warriors over the bulwarks. The English won, as they always have won, by sheer hard hand-fighting.

It was not to be expected that there would be any science of sea fighting. That could only come when professional seamen handled the naval gun, and a ship became a fighting unit with its own self-contained powers of offence. The gun was slowly coming into employment in the fourteenth century—though the use of 'bombards' at Crécy lacks valid demonstration—but if mounted on shipboard was of so little account that it is not even mentioned. And for long after ships carried guns these were subsidiary to the traditional close grapple. Fighting ships manœuvred for the weather gauge, fired vigorously upon an enemy as they swept down, and then grappled. Victory or defeat rested with the boarders not with the guns. The guns were served at sea exactly as artillery was served on land, to prepare the way for and cover an infantry attack.

There was no professional sea service. The mariners were civilians, and the navigating officers—the masters and rectors and constables—were civilians too. The seamen and their officers were called up for service, just as their ships were called up, and put under admirals who, with rare exceptions, were 'great men' with no knowledge of the sea. Discipline rested wholly in the hands of the admirals—or vice-admirals when they were appointed—and the necessary powers were conferred by temporary royal commission.

Few admirals held office for more than two years ; a more common period was for a few months. The chief admirals—called 'Captain and Admiral,' just as land commanders-in-chief were called 'Captain-General'—were put in charge of the northern and western squadrons, reckoning from the Thames, and a practice grew up of appointing local vice-admirals in the maritime districts. The admirals and vice-admirals administered the marine law in Courts of Admiralty, impressed ships and seamen when so ordered by the King and Council, and on shore exercised some part of the jurisdiction over wrecks and merchant shipping of a modern Admiralty plus Board of Trade. When a fleet or squadron was equipped for sea, admirals or vice-admirals commanded it—with very temporary commissions—but they were always liable to supersession by the King or a prince or a great man of exalted rank. It was a system so bad as almost to be incredible. But in it all there was just one small touch of humanity. An admiral or vice-admiral was supposed to represent the interests of the seamen, as distinct from those of the soldiers who were put on board to fight the ships. He was the sailors' advocate and mouthpiece, and was expected to uphold on their behalf such poor rights and privileges as remained to forcibly impressed civilian seamen. It is possible that this humane tradition sprang from the first admiral on record who bore a commission in English sea history—Gervase Alard, no great man but a humble sailor of the Cinque Ports, who in 1300 was commissioned by Edward the First to be 'Captain and Admiral of his fleet, of the ships of his Cinque Ports, and also of all other ports from the port of Dover by the sea coast, and of the whole county of Cornwall.' A large commission for one of no decorative ancestry, for one who had no claims to offer except skill in seamanship and courage in war. Nothing is known against this humble forerunner of Drake and Nelson, except that, like every other officer and man of the Cinque Ports, he had an ineradicable taste for sea robbery.

The whole system, when put under long-continued strain, of impressed merchant ships, impressed seamen, ignorant great men as temporary admirals, and of imperious royal personages, broke down completely and utterly. While Edward and his Black Prince were using up the supply of privately owned merchant ships and making no provision for their renewal, the French and Spanish maritime peoples were being encouraged to build. It did not take long in those days of quickly constructed wooden vessels

for sea sovereignty to swing over from the English coasts to those of France and Spain. The wealth and resources of England's enemies were far greater than the wealth and resources of England herself. The plague had smitten all alike, and the balance of power remained unchanged. England's seamen, wonderful as they proved themselves to be, and England's merchants, loyal within limits of reason as no doubt they were, could not indefinitely minister to the pugnacious passions of belligerent sovereigns. The whole fabric of Edward's sea sovereignty was bound to smash, and smash it did utterly and completely.

Edward III's campaign of 1340 for the conquest of the French throne opened with the battle of Sluys, one of the strangest sea fights in history. There is not a vestige of strategy about the business. The thing was staged just as if the opposing commanders had put their heads together and jointly planned operations. Edward proposed to land on the Flanders coast, and the French proposed to stop him. So the French massed their ships in four lines in the waters of the Swyn, and Edward, concentrating his northern and western squadrons ten miles distant, went at the opposing French lines exactly like a bull at a gate. The enemy's dispositions were reconnoitred not from the sea but from the land, by means of knights who landed and rode round to have a look. It must have been an astonishing sight, even for knights unfamiliar with sea operations. The French ships, one hundred and ninety of them, were drawn up in four lines. The ships in each line were bound together with iron anchors and cables. In the middle of the front line was the great cog *Christopher* and three other ships of English parentage which had recently been captured. Small boats filled with stones had been hauled up to the tops of the ships, whence their contents might be tipped upon the heads of the boarders—a delicate operation if the heads of defenders were to escape unscathed. It was a formation which invited a break-through, for the wings of the lines, entangled in their cables, could do nothing to support a shattered centre. For Edward and his shiploads of knights and men-at-arms nothing could have been better suited. The English ships arranged themselves to windward at leisure, the largest vessels in the van carrying archers and men-at-arms alternately. The men-at-arms were to board under cover of the archers' shot. The battle began at noon on June 24 under favourable conditions of wind and tide, and the issue was not long in doubt. As soon as the ships in the French centre had been captured

and the crews put overboard, the helpless chained-up front line could be attacked on both sides throughout its length and overwhelmed. Three lines were pierced and destroyed, but the fourth, consisting of barges and other small craft, broke up of itself and made off. As in all hand-to-hand sea fights, the vanquished suffered immense losses while the victors got off comparatively lightly. The crew and soldiers in a captured ship had no means of escape; according to the practice of the times they were either slaughtered or thrown overboard. Knights or nobles, also according to the practice of the times, were kept by their captors for ransom. Sluys was a very complete victory; of the one hundred and ninety French ships which barred Edward's passage into the seaport, all were captured or destroyed except twenty-four small craft. It was a victory which appealed to the imagination of the time, and has always bulked prominently in history; it was a simple, straightforward ding-dong affair which everyone could understand and appreciate; it was a thoroughly English battle; it enabled Edward to carry out his projected invasion of France, but, from the point of view of national interests, it was not nearly so important as Hubert de Burgh's battle of the Straits of the previous century, and as a 'real pretty fight' was not to be compared with *Les Espagnols sur Mer* of ten years later.

The mobilisation for the battle of Sluys involved a complete control of English shipping. All the vessels of one hundred tons and upwards of the western ports were ordered to concentrate at Portsmouth, the Cinque Ports flotilla assembled at Winchelsea, and there were further concentrations at Sandwich and in the Orwell of the northern contingents. A general embargo was laid on all ports, under which no vessel of any kind or size was allowed to proceed to sea without licence. By the time the mobilisation was completed, every vessel carrying twenty tons and upwards had been manned and equipped for service. The Commons were prevailed upon to grant an aid in money of one-tenth, though they professed to have no knowledge of the sea service, and to regard sea warfare as exclusively the business of the ports and their inhabitants. Before the battle, Edward seems to have mustered off the Flemish coast some two hundred and fifty vessels, but we do not know how many actually took part in the action. The early naval chroniclers almost always represent the English ships as gaining victories against greatly superior forces, but one is obliged to make liberal discounts from flattering exaggerations written for popular con-

sumption. In Edward's own letter to his eldest son—then a boy of ten and titular Duke of Cornwall—he tells in the first naval despatch on record a simple and modest story, giving full credit to the enemy for 'a very noble defence,' and attributing his own victory to the 'power and miracle' of God. It is a letter which reveals Edward as a very gallant gentleman, worthy of more useful employment than an aggressive war of exhaustion against his French neighbours.

For year after year during the spring and summer—the campaigning season and also the open season for trade—the demands upon the ports continued, and ships were kept waiting under arrest even in periods of truce. We have seen how during the late War a rigid and not always intelligent control of shipping caused exasperation among shipowners and merchants, though hostilities were continuous and urgent, and we can appreciate the feelings of the controlled English shipowners and merchants of the fourteenth century when hostilities were not continuous and the need for arrestment not always urgent. In addition to a claim of his own to the crown of France Edward involved himself in support of a claimant to the dukedom of Brittany, so that the privately owned ships, especially of the west, were subject to a double demand. The Spanish and Genoese, the greatest mariners of the age, had thrown their weight into the Brittany quarrel, and within three years of Sluys had so effectively punctured Edward's claim to maritime sovereignty that they roamed at will even in the sacred Narrows. There was no battle at sea of importance during the years which immediately preceded the campaign of Crécy, but Edward's sea communications were highly precarious. The French had begun to build in serious earnest, and had by 1344 again become a naval power strong enough to threaten England with invasion.

It is remarkable under these circumstances that in 1346 the English King should have been able to muster a large concourse of ships off the Isle of Wight and to effect a landing at La Hogue. We are reluctant to use the word *fleet*, for neither Edward nor any of his opponents ever possessed a fleet in the modern sense. They collected ships, packed soldiers on board, and scrambled across the sea. Raids were continuous, and there was no organised attempt by England or France or Spain to establish a real command of the English Sea. Those were days of short views. If an invader could get across the Channel somehow and land troops on the other side, he never appears to have worried much over the problem of getting back.

The campaign of Crecy was a success, and the siege of Calais followed upon it. But now the English Parliament began to take alarm. Our country was suffering severely. For six years its overseas trade had been stopped by the almost continuous embargo upon the privately owned shipping. A state of war at that time imposed little obstacle upon the hardy sea traders, provided that they were allowed to use their ships. They were so accustomed to an English Sea swarming with pirates that to trade with one hand while they fought with the other had become the normal practice. But the perpetual crushing embargo and impressment for Edward's wars was a frightful nuisance. To make matters worse the French King, whose shipyards had been busy for years, had made a compact with his brother sovereign, the Duke of Normandy, 'to destroy and annihilate the English realm and language.' The Commons therefore suggested to Edward that he should come home and look after his own country instead of roaming about France. They also urged that the sea should be defended at the King's expense only and that the people should henceforth be released from the burden. Edward replied that he knew no better way of defending England than by continuing to fight in France. The Commons, though they probably had no more knowledge of naval affairs than they professed—which was nothing—had put their finger on the weak strategical spot. Edward could not go on year in year out defending the English Sea unless he equipped, manned, and paid for a permanent naval force organised for the purpose. He could not withdraw year after year privately owned ships from their normal trading uses without destroying sooner or later the whole English mercantile marine. We do not suggest that the Commons realised all that their wail implied; but that protest of theirs in 1346—though it produced no fruit at the time—did contain the germ of a great idea.

Then in 1348-9 half the population of England was swept away by the plague. Two millions of men, women, and children died within six months. Few of the survivors had any heart for Edward's wars after that. The ports, west and north and south, already strained by the King's requisitions, would have had little hope of recovery had not the Black Death brought five years of peace to the sufferers. Trade with the Continent, especially through the new English emporium of Calais, quickly revived. There was ample work for the reduced population, and the year which followed the Black Death, 1350, became exalted in the latter part of Edward's reign into an *Annus Mirabilis*. England possessed

all the essentials for prosperity, and would have flourished if only her rulers had kept away from aggressive warfare. That really brilliant sea action, *Les Espagnols sur Mer*, fought in this year was purely defensive, and Edward fairly deserved the title which he assumed of 'The Avenger of Merchants.' If he could have brought himself to think more of humble English merchants during the whole of his reign, and kept his mind from dwelling upon his royal French grandfather's throne, the extraordinary long-suffering loyalty of his people would have been more justly rewarded.

The Spaniards and Genoese had, as we have mentioned, become a severe thorn in the English side. They made themselves free of the Channel and of English ships which they found there. Now that a truce had been made with France, Edward determined to clear the English Sea of the Spaniards, and to give his merchants a full opportunity of resuming their shipping trade. For once during his half a century of reign his warlike spirit was really serving his country's interests. A Spanish squadron had arrived at Sluys for merchandise in July of 1350, and Edward called up ships and seamen to concentrate at Sandwich in order to intercept the enemy on his return voyage to Spain. The King took command of his own fleet, and with him went that great inspiring fighter the Black Prince. The Spanish admiral did not wait to be attacked. He had forty large ships to the English fifty, but his ships were so much bigger and stronger, and carried so many more soldiers, that superiority in force was substantially on the Spanish side. The opposing squadrons met off Winchelsea on Sunday, the 29th of August.

There was little occasion for manoeuvre. The wind, blowing stiffly from the north-east, was fair for both fleets, which bore down upon one another and charged like squadrons of horse. 'Lay me against that Spaniard,' said Edward to his steersman of the cog *Thomas*, 'for I wish to joust with him.' The first Spanish carack severely rammed the King's cog and then passed on, but Edward got his iron teeth into a second. The famous cog *Thomas*, which for ten years had been Edward's favourite flagship, was split and sinking. The King and his men had no possible escape from drowning except by way of the enemy's ship. One can conceive no more effective stimulus to native courage. In a short fight Edward possessed himself of the Spaniard, pitched the crew overboard, and turned his capture against the enemy. The Black

Prince had a very similar experience. His ship, grappled to a Spaniard, also was sinking, but with the assistance of another English vessel the Prince and his men repeated the paternal manoeuvre. Another crew of Spaniards was pitched overboard to make way for the Prince. There cannot have been many sea battles in which both the commander and his chief lieutenant seized enemy vessels and transferred their flags in the heat of action. The fight ended in a handsome victory for the English. Some twenty-four or twenty-five large Spanish ships were captured, though the remainder—fifteen or so—escaped. All we know of the Spanish ships is that they excited universal admiration. 'They were so strong and so handsome that it was a pleasure to look at them.' This was before the action. Afterwards, one may conjecture that they were much battered and less good to look at. They could not have been much larger than Edward's flagship, the cog *Thomas*,—for he boarded and captured one of them single-handed—but some of them were evidently greatly superior to Edward's smaller vessels. For instance, one Spanish ship sailed off before the wind, dragging bodily with her an English vessel which could not cut loose her grappling irons, though her crew tried very desperately. The cog *Thomas* had a crew of 124 men, and was of something more than two hundred tons burthen. From what one knows of the period, it seems to be unlikely that any of the Spanish ships much exceeded three hundred tons. Still, ship for ship they surpassed the English vessels; it was a pretty fight and a very handsome victory.

For five years English shipping was relieved from the curse of embargo and impressment and allowed to pursue its lawful occasions. But from now onwards to the end of Edward's reign one misses the early enthusiasm. Life dragged. A generation which has seen every second man, woman, and child turn black and die during one autumn and winter loses the spring in its step. It was easy for those who wrote in the organised maritime security of the nineteenth century to complain that our ancestors of the latter half of the fourteenth lacked sea spirit. They were sickened of war, poor devils, more sickened even than we are now. For though we have lost the flower of our young manhood and have been made poor in treasure, we have not lost within one autumn and winter twenty millions dead of plague. Two million deaths in the fourteenth century correspond, in proportion of population, with twenty millions now.

The war began again in 1355, but the steadily declining mercantile marine of England was no longer able to sustain it. Squadrons were fitted out, Poitiers was fought, but the English coast was in greater danger from French raids than was the French coast from raids by England. Winchelsea was burnt and the surrounding country ravaged. The Peace of Bretigny brought a nine years' respite, but the sovereignty of the English Sea had already passed.

When that peace ended, England was gravely threatened with invasion. There was no pretence now of sea sovereignty, and the old King turned to his neglected Parliament to advise 'how his realm might be preserved.' The reply of the Commons (1371) is admirable for its sound common sense. They had warned the King twenty-five years before that the ports could not stand his system of requisition; now they set forth exactly what that system had produced in bitter fruits. They gave as the reason for the deterioration in the maritime forces: first, that arrests of shipping were often made long before vessels were wanted, during which interval the owners were at the expense of keeping the ships and crews without making any profit, by which many of them became so impoverished as to be obliged to quit their business, and their ships were ruined. Secondly, that the merchants who supported the navy had been so impeded in their voyages and affairs by divers ordinances that they had no employment for ships; that great part of the mariners had consequently abandoned their profession, and gained their livelihood in some other way; and that the ships were hauled up on shore to rot. Thirdly, that as soon as the masters of the King's ships were ordered on any voyage, they impressed the masters and ablest men of other ships; and those vessels being left without persons to manage them, many of them perished and their owners were ruined.

The King promised that these evils should be remedied, but took no steps to make good his promises. One cannot greatly blame him. The rot had gone too far, and who was he, an old man worn out and nearing the grave, to cut it out? He had been the cause of the disease, and it was now too late for him also to be the remedy.

In a little more than a year, on June 22 and 23, 1372, the final catastrophe came. After a two days' battle, most gallantly contested, the English fleet, under the Earl of Pembroke, was completely defeated by the Spaniards at La Rochelle. All our ships fell into the enemy's hands. The Commons met in November to consider

the state of the navy, but could do little more than lament the decline and point out, as they had done in the previous year, the rottenness of the royal system.

Nothing was done and nothing could be done. There was no navy to restore. The seas were open to an enemy, and if the French and Spaniards had then chosen to incur the risks of an invasion, our ancestors could have done little to impede a descent upon our shores. Nothing saved us except the general war exhaustion of Europe, and the recurrent visitations of the Eastern Plague. The two dates of epidemic horror (1348-9 and 1665) stand out conspicuous in history, but in between them plague smouldered in Western Europe as it did in our big cities and in our seaports, always ready to break out in flame and consume a new generation of lowered bodily resistance.

The successes and humiliations of the fourteenth century bore their fruits in England, though the crop was slow in ripening. The old system of the few King's ships and the many people's ships, of large sea claims based upon a precarious maritime militia, had received its death-blow. The idea of a permanent Royal Navy had been born in men's minds. It is possible that we should have not had to wait for the Tudors to found the modern Navy had not civil wars between rival branches of the Royal House absorbed so much of the kingly and knightly energies. Perhaps it was necessary for the feudal system to commit suicide before England could look beyond the Narrows and the English Sea towards the wide Atlantic spaces. For a hundred years England lay outside the current of maritime events. Our ancestors bore little part in the great oversea discoveries which were to revolutionise European ideas of the world. While royal and noble families fought and destroyed one another in petty battles on English soil, the mariners of Portugal were penetrating to the Far East, and Spain was about to chart a newly discovered world. We were slow starters, though when we did begin our seamen made up for much lost time. But that belongs to another chapter in our sea story, and has nothing to do with the vain claim and humiliating end to the sovereignty of the English Sea.

## CLARE'S DERIVATIONS.

AN excellent article on Clare's Manuscripts in a Review of last July has been followed by a valuable selection from them.<sup>1</sup> It is now possible to learn what sort of a poet this peasant, son of peasants, was. I emphasise his degree in life because, to the best of my knowledge, he is the only genuine peasant-poet we have. He was not only the son of a farm-labourer, but brought up to the calling himself, with all the hindrance to the ripening of genius which such an upbringing involves, and for the whole of his life at liberty, whenever he was not trying to live by poetry he was making shift to do so by farm labour. That sets him apart from such a man as Robert Bloomfield, as the quality of his verse does also. Bloomfield was a bad poet, Clare was a good one; but Bloomfield at twelve years old was apprenticed to a shoemaker in London, and seems never to have lived in the country again. It sets him apart also from Mr. Hardy who may have been of peasant origin, but scarcely served the ordinary calling of his class, and received an education which rapidly trained him, and fostered, not impeded, his genius. Clare's schooling was of the scantiest, his life days were never prosperous, his work was exhausting, his lodging as poor as you please. Yet he became the lion of a season; his first volume went into three editions in a year; he was patronised by peers, met and was familiar with Lamb and Hazlitt, Haydon and probably Keats. He was able somehow to collect books about him, and to read at large. The editors of the new Selection tell us he 'reverenced' Keats, that he admired Wordsworth, was critical of Scott. He must then have read Coleridge and Byron, perhaps even Shelley. There are indeed signs that he had read much. And from his reading, as may be guessed, he derived much.

But he had tunes of his own to sing, and was rarely an echo of other men. Here, from his early period, which the editors put at before 1824, is the opening of a ballad, which is like nobody else:

'A faithless shepherd courted me,  
He stole away my liberty.  
When my poor heart was strange to men,  
He came and smiled and took it then.

<sup>1</sup> Poems, chiefly from MSS., edited by Edmund Blunden and Alan Porter. Cobden-Sanderson, 1920.

'When my apron would hang low,  
 Me he sought through frost and snow.  
 When it puckered up with shame,  
 And I sought him, he never came.'

If I don't mistake the matter, that is the peasant vocal of his tribe.  
 And so is the song which follows it :

'Mary, leave thy lowly cot  
 When thy thickest jobs are done ;  
 When thy friends will miss thee not,  
 Mary, to the pastures run.'

But how far Clare was indeed that rare creature, a peasant articulate, can be seen best in 'The Flitting,' a poem which shows his love of his birthplace fast like roots in the soil. As a tree might cry when torn from the bank, so the peasant cries in his heart ; and so cried Clare in his verse :

'I've left my own old home of homes,  
 Green fields and every pleasant place ;  
 The summer like a stranger comes,  
 I pause and hardly know her face.'

He was moving from a hovel to a house found for him by Lord Milton ; as his editors say, 'Out of a small and crowded cottage in a village street to a roomy, romantic farm-house standing in its own grounds.' Yes, but he was rooted in Helpston, and must be dragged out.

'I lean upon the window-sill,  
 The trees and summer happy seem ;  
 Green, sunny green they shine, but still  
 My heart goes far away to dream  
 Of happiness, and thoughts arise  
 With home-bred pictures many a one,  
 Green lanes that shut out burning skies  
 And old crookt stiles to rest upon.'

'Nos patriae fines, et dulcia linquimus arva !' There speaks the peasant.

'The Flitting' is a good poem, and very near to the bone ; but Clare's particular excellence—that of close description—does not shine in it, and may have been dulled by his tears. 'Summer Evening' shows him at his best, a longish lyric in rhymed couplets of eight, interspersed with lines of seven, which may have been

inspired by speeches in 'Comus,' or by 'L'Allegro'—as I think probable—but possesses what those works have not, an eye on the object without losing an ear upon the tune :

'The sinking sun is taking leave,  
And sweetly gilds the edge of eve,  
While huddling clouds of purple dye  
Gloomy hang the Western sky.  
Crows crowd croaking overhead,  
Hastening to the woods to bed.  
Cooing sits the lonely dove,  
Calling home her absent love.  
With "Kirchup! Kirchup!" 'mong the wheats  
Partridge distant partridge greets. . . .'

and so on : a catalogue, if you will ; but how closely observed, how fresh and happy !<sup>1</sup>

Here he gets closer still : the plough-horse

'Eager blundering from the plough,  
Wants no whip to drive him now ;  
At the stable-door he stands,  
Looking round for friendly hands  
To loose the door its fastening pin,  
And let him with his corn begin. . . .'

The geese :

'From the rest, a blest release,  
Gabbling home, the quarrelling geese  
Seek their warm straw-littered shed,  
And waddling, prate away to bed. . . .'

Excellent. He runs thus through the farmyard, down to the very cat at the door, the sparrows in the eaves, and the boys below waiting till they tuck themselves in.

As he settled into his stride he grew stronger and better along his first line of minute observation and accurate phrasing. Best sign of any, he threw his description into his verbs. Take his so-called sonnet, 'Signs of Winter,' and mark the verbs in it :

'The cat runs races with her tail. The dog  
Leaps o'er the orchard hedge and *knarls* the grass.  
The swine run round, and grunt, and play with straw,  
Snatching out hasty mouthfuls from the stack.

<sup>1</sup> There seems to me a reminiscence of this poem in the *Shropshire Lad*.

Sudden upon the elm tree *tops* the crow,  
 Unceremonious visit pays and croaks,  
 Then *swops* away. From mossy barn the owl  
*Bobs* hasty out . . .'

Not one of those but does its work. 'Knarl,' as used in Northamptonshire, has the meaning of querulous complaint: its use here is onomatopoeic, probably from 'gnaw.' 'Swops away' is Northamptonshire dialect for 'swoops.'

Here are some more verbs, beautifully used :

'The nuthatch *noises* loud in wood and wild,  
 Like women turning *skreeking* to a child.  
 The schoolboy hears and brushes thro' the trees,  
 And runs about till *drabbled* to the knees.  
 The old hawk *winnows* round the old crow's nest. . . .'

Wrens, according to Clare, 'chitter,' peewits 'flop' in flight; the woodpecker 'bounces,' and

'Holloas as he buzzes by, "Kew kew".'

But I had intended to write about his derivations, and will turn to them now.

Oddly, perhaps, he did not begin with Thomson's 'Seasons,' as Bloomfield did, to his undoing, because he never left it as long as he went on writing. The vague idyllism, the obviousness and persistent generality of Thomson, are not to be found in Clare. On the other hand, in his 1820 volume, you have Burns :

'Ay, little Larky! what's the reason,  
 Singing thus in winter season?  
 Nothing, surely, can be pleasing  
 To make thee sing;  
 For I see nought but cold and freezing,  
 And feel its sting.'

That is rather feeble, and though it improves as it goes on, never for a moment catches the unapproachable sauciness and raciness combined of its original. Clare had very little humour—which that stanza demands.

He imitates Crabbe freely—in poems like 'The Gypsies' and 'The Parish: a Satire'—but lacks the antithesis of Crabbe, and the sententiousness too. Crabbe must always be moralising. Clare, like a true peasant, is a fatalist to the core. Let things be

as they may, because they needs must. That is the philosophy of the peasant—Sancho Panza's philosophy. One of his boldest derivations is from the lovely 'Ode to Evening' of Collins. Clare's is addressed to 'Autumn':

'Sweet vision, with the wild dishevelled hair,  
And raiment shadowy of each wind's embrace,  
Fain would I win thine harp  
To one accordant theme;

Now not inaptly craved, communing thus,  
Beneath the curdled arms of this stunt oak,  
While pillowed in the grass,  
We fondly ruminate

O'er the disordered scenes of woods and fields,  
*Ploughed lands, thin-travelled with half-hungry sheep,*  
*Pastures tracked deep with cows,*  
*Where small birds seek for seeds. . . .'*

The voice is the voice of Collins, but the eye is Clare's. I have spoken of his verbs. Certainly he did not get those from Collins. Observe them here:

'See! from the *rustling* scythe the *haunted* hare  
Scampers circuitous, with *startled* ears  
Prickt up, then squat, as by  
She *brushes* to the woods.'

And once more:

'And now the *bickering* storm, with sudden start,  
In *flirting* fits of anger *carps* aloud,  
Thee urging to thine end,  
Sore wept by troubled skies.'

I suspect that distich to be fruit of Clare's 'reverence' for Keats.

There are traces of Wordsworth, as in the following 'Impromptu':

"Where art thou wandering, little child?"  
I said to one I met to-day.  
She pushed her bonnet up and smiled,  
"I'm going upon the green to play.  
Folks tell me that the May's in flower,  
That cowslip-peeps are fit to pull,  
And I've got leave to spend an hour  
To get this little basket full!" . . .'

and there are others to be found ; but he did not apprehend anything more than the wrappings of the great poet, did not touch his sudden and starry magic—those chance gleams of unearthly light, unearthly insight which, in Wordsworth, make us catch our breath. But there was another Wordsworth who could make Dutch pictures, from whom Clare could more happily borrow. I think he gets near to that one in 'The Wood-cutter's Night Song,' which begins :

'Welcome, red and roundy sun,  
Dropping lowly in the west ;  
Now my hard day's work is done,  
I'm as happy as the best. . . .'

and ends :

'Joyful are the thoughts of home,  
Now I'm ready for my chair,  
So, till morrow-morning's come,  
Bill and mittens, lie ye there !'

The whole is a sweet and happy fireside picture.

The most curious derivation remains, rather more than a derivation. The editors print (or, in this case, reprint) a ballad called 'The Maid of Ocrum, or Lord Gregory,' which at first blush is not only remarkable as a poem, but even more so as an imitation of a real folk-ballad. It imitates not more the garb than the spirit of that beautiful thing. This is the opening verse :

'Fair was the Maid of Ocrum  
And shining like the sun,  
*Ere her bower key was turned on two*  
*Where bride bed lay for none.'*

If that is not a terse and graphic opening, I don't know one. Then the tale begins.

Now it is proper to say here that the tale is exactly the subject of a ballad called 'The Lass of Roch Royal,' published for the first time in Child's great book 'from a manuscript of the first half of the eighteenth century.' It is there called 'Fair Isabell of Roch Royall' ; but there is a variant called 'The Lass of Ocrum,' which derives itself in turn from an Irish version called 'The Lass of Aughrim.' That is only half the story. Where did Clare find the poem which, until it was printed in the 'Roxburghe Ballads,' only existed in the British Museum ? There can be little doubt of the

answer. When he was a boy, cow-tending on Helpston Common, his present editors tell us, 'he made friends with a curious old lady called Granny Baines, who taught him old songs and ballads.' That is the answer; but other questions arise. What did Clare do with 'The Lass of Ogram' when he had it? The quatrain just quoted, at any rate, is not in it. It will be found also that he has added an ending. The tale shortly is that the lass was betrayed by Lord Gregory, and found herself with child and forsaken. She went to plead with her lover, who was asleep. His mother answered for him and denied her the entry, failing proof. Three 'tokens' are demanded, which the lass supplies. Finally, the mother drives her away, and at her despairing cry Lord Gregory wakes. He has dreamed of the lass, and questions his mother:

'Lie still, my dearest son,  
And take thy sweet rest;  
It is not half an hour ago  
The maid passed this place.'

The ballad ends with Lord Gregory's remorse and lamentation. Clare, after his masterly opening, plunges into the tale:

'And late at night she sought her love;  
The snow slept on her skin:  
Get up, she cried, thou false young man,  
And let thy true love in.'

That is new, except for the matter of the second line, which Clare has lifted and, I think, not improved. The original has:

'It rains upon my yellow locks,  
And the dew falls on my skin.'

He uses that also, but, since he was bothered by the snow which he had invented, is forced to change it for:

'The wind disturbs my yellow locks,  
The snow sleeps on my skin.'

In the revelation of the tokens he is not so simple as the ballad, but his additions are to the good. The second token:

'O know you not, O know you not  
'Twas in my father's park,  
You led me out a mile too far,  
And courted in the dark.'

That is both original, and observed—from many a rustic wooing. The third token was the betrayal, where, as he cannot possibly better his model, he wisely conveys it. The ending, which is Clare's own, is artless and rather comic :

'And then he took and burnt his will  
Before his mother's face,  
And tore his patents all in two,  
While tears fell down apace.'

Finally, 'He laid him on the bed, And ne'er got up again.'

While we may be satisfied how much of 'The Maid of Ocrum' is Clare's, we shall never know how much was Granny Baines's. That is one of the secrets of folk-song which is insoluble. The 'rain upon her yellow hair,' the dew sleeping on her skin, are beautiful additions of some unknown English minstrel to 'The Lass of Roch-royall.' A close collation of the two would be interesting, if not fruitful. Clare's 'lay-out' of the tragedy, in his two opening octaves, is his only serious contribution. I do not find that he did anything else of the kind. He has plenty of narrative, but no other dramatic narrative, and of his many tales in verse none approaches this one either for terseness or the real ballad touch of magic.

The present editors have done a real service to literature as well as to Clare's memory by their new Selection ; and it may be that they are not at the end of their discoveries. By what they have put forward so far they have shown Clare to be a considerable poet, more considerable than we could possibly have supposed by the work published in his lifetime. It is very much to me that the peasantry should have produced a poet of such power and charm, who interprets so faithfully the life of a race so old upon our earth, and so close to it.

MAURICE HEWLETT.

## THE TOYNBEE HALLS OF AMERICA.

BY MRS. S. A. BARNETT, C.B.E.

It was a kind invitation that the Federation of Settlements sent to me to spend as many weeks as I could spare in visiting them and lecturing on Housing. Living as the settlers do among the poorest and humblest of their country's citizens, they knew the bad housing conditions that prevailed in their large cities, and their hope was, that if I spoke of what had been done in England to meet the need, both public conscience and imagination would be awakened, and English housing schemes emulated and improved upon.

What could one do but accept so delightful an invitation, which promised not only the interest of seeing some ten of eastern America's great towns, but of meeting many of her most thoughtful social reformers, and hearing from them of their civic, educational, and racial problems; and last but not least, obtaining a chance of doing something by placing one's experience at their service, to show at least a few thousands of that great nation of our good feeling towards them, and of our appreciation of their action in the war?

So I gleefully accepted the invitation, and after a delightful voyage and a short thrillingly interesting visit to Canada, Miss Paterson and I entered the States *via* Buffalo, from which place East Aurora is distant some seventeen miles. We went to East Aurora because the Federation of Settlements had journeyed thither to hold their Annual Conference, selecting with typical American hospitality that place as being 'the nearest to Canada, where we understood you are to be in September.'

So it was in Mr. Hubbard's quaint and almost historic Inn that the Settlement workers from all parts of America met to confer. To confer in a double sense. First with each other on their work, and then to confer on me the honour of being their President. Among their desires was to hear of the welfare of their parent, Toynbee Hall, and the influences in the life of Canon Barnett which had resulted in its creation. So on a *very* hot night (thermometer 90°), and to a large audience, I told briefly of my husband's education in Bristol and Oxford, of his five years' work as a curate in

West London, and then of the assumption of the duties, responsibilities, and sorrows consequent on the care of what the then Bishop of London described as 'the worst parish in my diocese, inhabited mainly by a criminal population much corrupted by doles.'

Face to face with the social, educational, and economic problems of such a district, he and I realised together that they required the best thought of the best trained minds of the time. So we often journeyed to Oxford and Cambridge to tell undergraduates and young dons of the needs of the poor—needs which could not be reached by money doles, but only met by the gift of the most valuable assets of the period—thought, knowledge, sympathy, and the passionate patience required to work reforms. I had to tell my American audience that so many men responded—men who have shown the quality of their brains by since attaining the most responsible positions in their respective walks in life—that a residential club-house had to be built for them, which we called after our valued friend, Arnold Toynbee, whose beautiful life had then (1883) but recently been cut short by death. In Toynbee Hall lived, and still live, some twenty University graduates, where with friends of all classes the best things every man most cares for can be shared, through channels which often change with circumstances, but whose goal is ever the same, 'goodwill and peace among men.'

There was no need to tell the large body of thoughtful men and women gathered at East Aurora anything about the kinds of work undertaken by the settlers in Toynbee Hall, because Mr. Galan P. Stone, a friend of the American Settlements movement, having read the life of Canon Barnett, had promptly bought 500 copies and given himself the pleasure of presenting one to every Settlement in the United States, as well as to other centres of social service. Thus the Conference had read all about the activities of the first University Settlement in the past years, and were therefore at liberty to discuss their own difficulties, which differed widely, as they ranged from those in Kentucky and Buenos Ayres to others in New York or Chicago.

As I listened I gained some insight into the complexity of their problems, and the warm hospitality offered enabled me, by staying in the Settlements, to learn enough of the American conditions to make the Editor of the CORNHILL think this article would be of interest to its readers.

Our English problems compared with those of the United States

seem slight and almost domestic, for in America foundations have to be laid on three main facts. First, that a great number of those who need social service are coloured people, with whom it is against normal human nature (whatever a few angelic characters may believe) to feel on terms of absolute equality. Secondly, that the population is composed not only of Americans, but of masses of people from Southern and Central Europe who have different standards of life, different ideals for conduct, and a different attitude to the State. And lastly, there is the Jew, who avowedly keeps himself to himself, is filled with tribal spirit, and often considers, as his forebears did, that his neighbours are Philistines, and fit objects to borrow from or to best.

With the clear wisdom of loving hearts, the Settlement workers have faced in a practical spirit these difficult and disintegrating conditions. For the Jew and the coloured people they have either established Settlements—self-managed and supported—or else have arranged separate organisations to meet their needs (in Pittsburgh, for example, both methods are existent and flourishing), and to the far larger problem of the Americanisation (to use their own word) of the huge numbers of emigrants who yearly reach their shores they devote their best brains and powers of initiation.

I have often thought, as I sat in the sort of Reception Hall, which is in most Settlements considered essential to their methods, and into which people of every sort stroll more or less casually, how cheering and sustaining it must be to a poor emigrant bewildered by the noise, and the new conditions, and the thousand and one things which are forbidden in a highly civilised State, to find, sitting behind a desk with some inviting chairs quite close, a charming lady, ready to listen, to help stumbling English, to explain difficulties, and to give advice, and who does not expect the visit to be followed by attendance at a Church service or a religious meeting. This attitude of sympathetic patience is all the more remarkable because it is found in a land where in some business offices one finds emblazoned words saying :

‘ We are busy. You ought to be. Get out ’ ;

or,

‘ We know all about the weather. Begin ’ !

notices which are consistent with a speed of living and an atmosphere of hurry which have to be felt to be credited.

To turn this motley mass of foreign humanity into American citizens is not easily accomplished, neither can it be said to be even partially achieved, for though the schools teach the children English, and explain the flag, and evoke patriotism by saluting it, the bed-rock principle of individual freedom permits foreigners to aggregate together, and in all the large Eastern towns there are whole districts where you would not know you were in America, but could easily believe that by the magic carpet you have been conveyed to Italy, Poland, Greece, Serbia, or Spain.

Yet to give these emigrants a spirit of unity, and some sort of sense of cohesive nationality, is essential for the well-being of the State, and their contribution to this civic puzzle is one of the most valuable and far-reaching of the influences of the Settlements. In some cases the choice to live in the centre of a recognised foreign neighbourhood is deliberately made.

'I want to serve the Italians,' I was told by a very able man, 'and if I can get someone to plank down 50,000 dollars I shall build a Settlement House in their quarter.'

In other cases after the Settlement had been built, the whole population moved, and what had been an Italian district became a Balkan one, or the Greeks had left and given place to the Poles. This changing population accentuates the difficulties of Settlement workers, and to me it makes their sacrifice all the greater. To accept, as the normal conditions of your life, dirt, smoke, darkness, noise, smells, crowded streets, and absence from any beauty except what you make in your home, does not seem to me, who did it for thirty-three years, an impossible demand for your own countrymen and co-religionists, who have, below the surface, the same ideals, the same religion, and the same intentions as yourself. But it requires a higher devotion to do it for aggressive people, whether Gentiles or Jews, who don't care twopence for the country of their adoption, whose sole aim is to get rich and move away from the neighbourhood in which they first find themselves, whose sense of public spirit is non-existent, and who don't even pretend to gratitude. To work for this sort of people, to have them constantly changing, and to live year after year in their midst, seems to me to indicate a loftiness of spirit and a capacity for sacrifice unprecedented in the history of human devotion.

Besides welcoming the foreigner, the Settlements do a great deal of both pioneer and personal work. For instance, the vast playground and park system in Chicago owed its inception to

Hull House, where in its small courtyard and reception-rooms was demonstrated the children's need and enjoyment of organised play. As everybody knows, Chicago now has sixty-six parks, with playhouses, swimming baths, paddling pools, game fields, libraries, and gymnasia, the latter both under cover and in the open air. Anyone can come and enjoy freely any of these privileges, merely bespeaking the rooms for dances, dramatic performances, debates, meetings, or for any purpose except politics. The libraries are connected with a central depot and exchange about 5000 volumes a month. The expense is borne by the civic funds, and each play-house costs about £5000 a year. There are some people who think that Chicago has gone too far in supplying means of free amusement—an opinion I might have shared had I not had the testimony of those whose work is the protection of girls, and heard of the hideous and abnormal viciousness of that great city; and had I not learned that thirty-nine children under thirteen years of age were killed in the streets of New York during last July, mainly, it is stated, owing to the inadequate number of playgrounds in the largest town in the world.

All educationalists must regret that so much money and force should be given to pleasure, and a protest has recently been received from a Roman Catholic organisation, who complained that their young people get freely, without any control, what hitherto they had provided for them with guiding influences; but, on the other hand, one has to weigh the fact that these foreign young people, recently emancipated from the conventions and traditions of their own countries, ready to despise their parents because of their inability to speak English,<sup>1</sup> or to adapt themselves to the new conditions of the new land,—these young people are extraordinarily greedy for pleasure; and side by side with that fact is the ugly one that the abolition of the trade in alcohol has liberated dissolute persons who are eager to find other forms of iniquitous pleasure, and offer to young girls free admittance to dance halls, theatres, cabarets, and even lake excursion boats, with ulterior intentions of vice. In any case, the park play houses, if they do not lead the youth of Chicago upward along the high roads of intellectual pleasure, at least offer them safe gaiety.

I have dwelt on this instance of the pioneer nature of the Settle-

<sup>1</sup> The 1920 Federal census has revealed that there are 382,039 persons between twenty-one and fifty in New York State who are unable either to speak English or read or write it.

ment work, because it seems better to state one example fully and then only refer to others, which are indeed too numerous for more than mention; but the settlers could claim (if they ever did claim) the recognition by the State of its duty to feeble-minded children and to those afflicted with tuberculosis. In Chicago, Miss Addams still conducts the pioneer open-air school on her roof-garden, but it is supported by the State, which has founded its successors.

The Visiting Nurse Service had its birth in the Settlement in Henry Street, New York, where Miss Wald's strong, generous soul is felt from the centre to the circumference, and all through its countless activities.

It was Settlement workers who, convinced that naughty children were mainly mentally or morally defective, gathered experience and statistics, until the Government were influenced to provide a mental expert to assist in the diagnosis of cases in the 'Children's Courts.'

The need for some form of associated physical exercise has been met in many of the Settlements, who organise games in their lecture halls, visits to the free Zoos, play hours on the lake beaches, romps in back-yards, with such good result that in some towns the educational authorities have established 'Community Centres,' the result being an appreciable reduction in the number of delinquents appearing in the 'Children's Courts' from districts in which such facilities for innocent happiness exist.

The wonderful and deeply interesting Children's Bureau of the United States Department, whose office is at Washington, grew out of research work undertaken by a Settlement in connexion with the employment of children; and it is good to know that the labours of the large staff, ably supervised by Miss Julia Lathrop, include the whole range of children's interests, from milk centres, baby farms, infant life protection, to their presence in unwholesome workshops and haunts of evil—a watchful mother ever growing in power.

I find myself writing of some of the results of Settlement work before I have tried to present to English readers the Settlements themselves, the homes of the settlers from whom so much good work issues. It is not possible to describe all those I saw and stayed in and visited, so perhaps it is better to depict the first one which was established by Miss Jane Addams in 1889 after two visits to us in Toynbee Hall, Whitechapel.

The house keeps its old name—Hull House—and was large and commodious to begin with, but its additions now run up one street, round a quadrangle, and down a neighbouring alley. When I was there in October there were forty-one residents, both men and women, each of whom has a large bed-sitting room. Besides these residents, there are eighteen flats, some of them containing as many as five rooms, in which live married people, or those who for various reasons do not care to join continuously in the community life, but who want to render public service under the inspiration of Miss Addams, and in close touch with the activities of the Settlement. To give even a list of these activities would devour my allotted space, but they include a weaving industry, schools for feeble-minded and tuberculous children, an infant welfare centre, a girls' hostel, a large caféteria, schools of music, art, and literature, dramatic societies, gymnasia for both sexes, clubs of every sort (and for different nations as well as for all ages), handicraft and dancing classes, mothers' information bureau, men's debating unions, and many other organisations which have had their origin in loving-kindness. The house having been added to as needs arose, is not a monument of suitable planning, but perhaps that is not a real drawback, as its very make-shift-ness tends to encourage people to feel at home. And certainly they do. They stroll in and out with a freedom that I should have found trying at Toynbee Hall, sit down, and seem unable to go away.

'What is she going to do?' I asked, as a small girl of twelve or thirteen opened the front door and walked through the lounge hall.

'Practise the piano, I expect,' the lady in charge replied.

'But is she expected? Is someone in the room?'

'I am not sure. I don't know her, but I expect she knows the way she wants to go.'

Now multiply this centre of goodwill 440 times, not in its size and the number of its activities (though there are a few other Settlements doing work of a similar magnitude), but multiply this spirit, not 440 times but 4400 times (for Settlements average about ten residents each), and some idea will be obtained of the enormous importance of their work in the United States. To some people it is a matter of regret that these influential organisations should not be linked up with some definitely declared religious denomination. Indeed, since I received the honour of being made the first President, I have received letters asking me to use my presi-

dential influence in this direction ; but the leading spirits, Miss Addams, Miss Wald, Mrs. Simkovitch, Miss MacDowell, Mr. Elliott, Mr. Robert Woods, Mr. Kennedy, Dr. Taylor, and Mr. Cooper, hold the view that their present attitude is most productive of peace and goodwill, and one that results in closer relations with ministers of religion. As I listened to their opinions I was reminded of a member of the Toynbee Hall branch of the Women's Co-operative Guild, who many years ago told me with much indignation that someone had rebuked her for coming to St. Jude's, 'because Canon Barnett did not preach Christ.'

'Never mind,' I remarked, trying to soothe her. 'What did you say ?'

'I said "Well, if he don't preach Him, he practises Him, which is far better."'

The influence of the Settlements and the settlers is both deep and wide, direct as well as indirect. They select in most cases the least desirable districts in which to establish themselves, and from there shed forth the light of love. (The house in Philadelphia is appropriately called the 'Light House.') They come into frequent touch with the cultivated and wealthy, and take advantage of the Press for the promulgation of their ideas. They know their districts well, and often use their experience to influence legislation and to push reform. They call strongly and continuously for volunteers, and when they get them employ them effectively, but the large majority of their resident workers are paid and are mainly women. In most Settlements the residents are both men and women, but candour compels me to state that with but few exceptions in the Settlements I visited 'the grey mare was the better horse of the pair.' Settlement work in America does not seem to attract the same class of male mind as it does in England, but the reverse is the case so far as women are concerned. The salaried staff are nearly all University women, who take a far smaller salary than they could obtain in other professions, in order to serve the people with a consciousness of financial sacrifice.

To remunerate such large staffs means raising considerable incomes, and my admiration was mixed with envy when heads of Settlements prepared their big budgets with cheerful assumption that the money would be given, if not by the rich, then by the smaller contributions of those endowed with more sympathy than dollars.

One of the reasons why the expenses are so heavy is because

most of the larger Settlements have country camps, some of which are what they would call 'large locations.' Here there are erected charming summer rest-houses for the sick, the ailing mothers, the weakly children, while the growing youths and the robust boys are not left unprovided for. To these camp houses, most of them daintily though very inexpensively furnished, there come for varying periods every sort of Settlement member, some paying their own expenses, others as guests, some picnicking, having carried their own food, others as convalescents receiving every care. Among them all runs a delightful spirit of friendly equality created by the courtesy of the Settlement workers, who act as hostesses or hosts. The trustees of Settlement houses have shown their foresight and wisdom in buying large areas of land round their country camps, and it is on these estates that I am earnestly hoping will be built garden villages or garden cities. It would be a piece of fine pioneer work, an upward step on the plane Settlement workers have hitherto trodden, for them to lead the way in housing reform. The need of it is apparent to them as to hardly any other federated body, for their experience is among those who have the worst habitations.

It would not be interesting to the readers of the CORNHILL to tell in detail what are the conditions under which I have seen people live in many American cities, and a few facts about New York will suffice. As a result of the present shortage of houses, 16,000 apartments voted by the Housing Committee of the Reconstruction Commission to be 'unfit for human habitation' are not only now used as dwellings but 'families are doubling up two in an apartment.' Of these apartments the following description is vouched for by twenty-five of the leading Settlement houses in New York, who with other social service organisations undertook a careful survey :

'Out of 1587 rooms less than half had windows on the street and yard, receiving their only light and air from shafts, some of them 2 feet 4 inches wide, most of them less than 5 feet ; 270 rooms in which people lived and slept had no street light, many of them being a series of three or four rooms borrowing light and air from each other, only the first one opening into a small court. [These rooms are in houses six stories high.] Of 531 tenements only 20 had "toilets." For 503—in which on an average more than five persons lived—there were only 208 "toilets" in the halls, and 5 in the yards.'

This is a terrible report, and it concludes with these words : 'This block is not by any means the worst in New York. It is typical of hundreds of other blocks.'

It would be both foolish and untrue to say that Settlements could easily undertake the labour of housing the vast population which the American people have allowed to enter their cities and disgracefully overcrowd their city dwellings, but it is both wise and true to say that during my lecturing tour I found such an enormous number of people eager to do what is best and of the most permanent use, that I am convinced that if the Settlements would show the best way of housing the people they would get abundant aid and support, by brains, work, and money.

This, then, is my hope. It is not want of appreciation of what Settlements have done and are doing, both directly and indirectly, that makes me long to see them undertake a still larger duty. I agree with Mr. Teller of Pittsburg, who writes : 'The presence of Settlements is a constant defiance to vice.' I yield to none in my admiration of the deep human love which will bear a thousand insupportable noises and smells in order to lift the degraded among the coloured people. I survey with reverence such actions as that of Mrs. Bradford in stopping the car in a strange neighbourhood and getting out in the pouring rain, and descending into a dirty area, because a dirty, blackish child had dropped its dirty ball and was crying dirty tears. I remember and venerate the way one of the ablest women I ever met bore endless trivial interruptions rather than even appear to ignore the stupidest and humblest of her neighbours ; but it is just because the ground that can produce such deeds is the best ground from which can spring the understanding sympathy that could create worthy homes, that I venture to hope that I shall live to see the 440 American Settlements uniting together to pioneer beautiful model housing schemes.

Then indeed I should die a proud President !

## WANDERING RORY.

BY GEORGE BLAKE.

## I

THE taste for travel bides with the island folks from youth to age. It is this same taste that sent them of old to wars in which they had no concern, to the sea-travelling in the forecastles of privateers, which sends them now to the far colonies at the world's end. It is in the blood of them—the blood which sprang from the Norse veins and the Celtic fathers of old Dalriada. And, if it makes of the isles poor, lonely places, it gives our people something of the poet's humour, the rare joy in sights and foreign smells, the fine uplift of the careless wayfarer.

Of the most restless in Caray was Rory, he who dwelt with the old woman in Auchnagaol. True, his very birth was a shiftless affair; for his people were of Ireland, black-a-vised folk, who traded in their smacks among the isles, and cast anchor behind Estray that Rory might have a gentle passage into life. The mother came ashore with him when he was but six weeks old, left him with Teresa while the smack cruised in the stormy north, and never returned to claim the waif. He was nursed by the widowed wife of that young Alasdair who went down with his boat off Oa; he grew to strong boyhood, a careless orphan; but always he remained with the old woman, as much a son as any of her blood.

It is told of him that his schooldays were wild. Always he would be playing truant from the schoolhouse above the bay; always he was for jaunts with the fishermen to Cuilisport or Melfort, and that at the wildest seasons; often he was to be seen by the curious, lying flat on the headland of Cuil, staring out to the limitless ocean with the wistful eye of youth. There was no holding of him. A wanderer he was born, a wanderer he would ever be. Once he told the minister that the loop of the white, mainland road across the neck at Tarbert drew him like a magnet towards the Lowlands, called him with the voice of careless freedom. He had ever the trick of apt speech that comes somehow with vagrant birth.

Certainly, he was a trial to old, gentle Teresa, who would have kept him by her, labouring in the fields of her croft at Auchnagaol.

If he was not leaving the byre unswept to go on some daft jaunt after an errant stag from Jura, he was off to the fair at Tarbert while the rabbits ate the widow's crops. 'Rory, Rory, *m'eudail*,' she used to say to him, 'will you never be settling down like a decent lad, and not be travelling in all airts like one of the tinker folk? It's a lass you should be looking for, who will make you a good wife and keep you at your ain fireside.'

But Rory would only answer with his laugh, that was like the call of a bird for freedom and sweetness. 'The lass will come in time,' he would answer. 'Wait you till I have seen what is behind the hill of Narrachan, and what adventures life has to give.'

But it was little of adventure that Rory was to see before the lass came to whom his wanderer's heart was to be given. A fine girl was Mairi, straight and tall as a rush, with crow-black hair that eddied across a white brow. She was of fisher-folks from the clachan at Port Mor, and Rory met her on one of his ploys after the cod in the season of spring. It seemed that they loved from the first, for Rory was late on the North-end road through that time of sowing, and the father of Mairi found them arm-in-arm on the moor soon after the lass had come home from service in a mainland dairy. They were always together through the bland nights of early summer, and the affair was spoken of throughout the island. Teresa, in Auchnagaol, said not a word to the lad, but smiled often to herself in the certainty of her simple hope. She knew that Mairi, and Mairi only, could change the errant nature of her Rory and bind him to a warm home in Caray.

Truly the affair shaped that way in the first months of their sweethearting. Rory became almost the laughing-stock of those with whom he used to jaunt so freely. First, he failed old Angus Neil in a journey to the market at Kilmichael, the bravest show in all Knapdale. Then Col of Urradale wondered when he shook his head at a cruise to the fishing in Harris Loch. In the end, they saw his open courting of Mairi on the treeless hills of Ardarrach. Many a jest passed in the parlour of the Inn.

'What is come over Rory at all, at all?' one would ask. 'He is the stay-at-home these days.'

And another would answer with a laugh: 'It's a lass, Colin, a lass, you may be sure. He will be taking home Mairi of Port Mor soon enough. Wait you a month or two.'

Spring melted gently into summer, and still Rory was throng

at the loving. It was common talk in the village that they would wed at Lammass. But it is often that the nature of men gives the lie to old wives' tales; and so it was with Rory. There is no telling the inward struggle that raged in his heart these first months through the dour affray between his old taste for wandering and his love for the fine girl who had taken his fancy. For a time, the glamour of wooing possessed him, but surely the lust of adventure came back on him. His wild soul drove him in the end to speak of it to her as they walked in the rush of the salty sea-winds.

At first she only laughed at him, thinking his spoken thoughts to be but the flights of a wayward fancy.

'Oh, Rory, Rory! But you are the droll one!' she used to tell him. 'Is Caray not big enough to be holding you and me?'

'Big enough, surely,' he answered. 'But it is only the wide world that can hold the soul of us.'

She would blush for pleasure at this fancy, but she came in time to grow weary of the plans he would always be making. She pretended to be angry with him for his dreaming and his talking of travel, and her indifference stabbed to the heart of the lad. He kept silence after that. But the passion for journeying kept gnawing, gnawing, at the soul of him.

It was in the autumn that the itching of his feet for the road overcame his gentleness with Mairi. They had climbed to the high peak of Creag Bhan on such a day as never was before for fineness. All the islands lay beneath, and the blue sea, the great sea, stretching infinitely into the west; Kintyre-way, the hills swam beautifully in the haze, with the white ribbon of roadway winding alluringly over their swelling shoulders. The old desire came strong on Rory.

'Mairi, white love,' he said, 'I have been thinking this while back that a jaunt to the Lowlands would be doing me good.'

The girl made no answer, and after a time he spoke again. 'Do you think, *m'eudail*, that you could be sparing me for a time?'

It was then that Mairi's long patience with his whim broke away from her.

'Yes, Rory, I can spare you fine,' she said hardly. 'For I am tired of this talk of travel. If I am so little to you as that, go you now and be done with it. It is no favours from you that I am wanting.'

She rose swiftly.

'Mairi!' pleaded Rory.

'No, no! Rory,' she continued. 'You have spoken the word yourself, and I would not stay if you were getting down on your bended knees to me.'

And off she ran across the moor. In a strange, bewildered state of mind, Rory rose from the heather, and walked away across the hill to Auchnagaol. By the Well of Beatheg he met the farmer of Cuil, Angus Campbell.

'Ho, ho, Rory!' said this one. 'It is little we are seeing of you in these days.'

'And it's nothing you will see of me from this day on,' snapped Rory in reply.

'Are you for off, then?'

'I am that.'

'God! But you are the very man I want. I have a drove of cattle for the Falkirk Tryst, and I go with them to-morrow. Are you for coming?'

'I will be there,' said Rory firmly, and walked off homewards, his mind made up.

## II

In the half light of the morning, Rory and Angus set out on their journey to the low country. First they must swim the drove of stout cattle across the Sound, but the wind was setting off the mainland shore, and the bestial, smelling the earth, plunged strongly towards the beach at Largie. They were on the white high road by the hour of breakfast, and at midday they halted on the crest of the Tarbert road—the same road that beckons as seen from the top of Creag Bhan—to look their last on Caray. The island swam blue in the sea, and Rory felt the tug of longing at his heart strings. Then he looked eastward to where the road fell away into lands unknown. His old desire came back on him strongly.

'We had better be moving on,' he said to Angus, and with the words put away home-sickness from him.

So they travelled for days, through the fat lands of Knapdale, up into the rougher country about the head of Loch Fyne, over Rest and Be Thankful, down to fair Loch Lomond and the Lennox Hills, and so with a fine suddenness of vision to the shores of Clyde and the teeming Lowland towns. Twenty-five miles they would make in the day, or thirty when the roads were good, and always

they were ready for the kindly pillow that waited them among the heather. Then the beasts were allowed to wander as they pleased, while one man watched under the high stars and the other slept. Not until they were truly in the Lowlands did they meet wayfarers in plenty. The Highland tracks were empty, winding lonely between the grave hills, and over them the little convoy wandered like pilgrims of old. The blue sky, and the green hills, and the brown, smiling burns were their good friends.

These were days of true delight for Rory, for now he had granting of his long desire, and reality was finer than the wildest of his dreams. It was magic to follow the patient cattle and hear their call to the great hills, to whistle on the wise, shaggy dogs, and to watch the always wonderful unfolding of the road before them. He never lacked for company. Angus was full of the strangest tales of doings at the Tryst to which they journeyed, and if his companion fell silent, Rory could always find friendship in the dogs or the bestial, or his own roaming fancies. It was all adventure. Whiles they would come on a cottage when a soft-eyed girl brought out milk for them to drink; whiles they stopped at lone inns and listened to the talk of shaggy men from the hills. Always there was the wonder of open sky and the road before them, so that Rory must sing his delight in songs that came from the deepest springs of the heart's joy.

'Man, but you are the cheery one!' Angus would say to him.

'Aye, man, cheery,' he would answer. 'But is this not the life to make a man sing?'

'Just so, just so—for the heart that's young.'

'*Dhé!*' Rory would say. 'But my heart will never be aught else! The road for me—'

He was sorry when they came at length to the town of the speckled church where the bargaining must begin; but after a day on the crowded moor of Stenhouse, he found the new pleasure of forgathering with the drovers and buyers as great as any that the lonely splendour of the glens had given him. There were folks from all airts here—sleek graziers from Clydesdale and Methven, tall, wiry men of the hills, hard dealers from ancient Fife, strolling players from England, and a clan of gipsy-folk from Galloway. It was these last who took the fancy of wandering Rory. For two days Angus was not to be spoken with, so throng was he over the selling of his cattle, and always did the feet of the lad take him to the reeky camp of the Romany people, where he

was ever sure of a welcome for the wild nature and splendid tongue that were his, and where old Faa, the chief of them, would tell the heart-drawing tales of his people's journeyings.

They had travelled on strange roads, had the Faas, and tasted the air in every part of Albainn. The warm sun had given them richness of colour; with generations of huntsmen behind them were their eyes keen yet kindly; and the vagrom life of tents and open roads had given them a fine wayward temper which reached to the heart of Rory. As old Faa spoke of their brave doings, Rory saw the hills and tasted the bracken-scented air of Highland glens. This was the life for him, he felt; Romany blood was surely in his veins. His heart bounded at a word from the old gipsy.

'I am thinking, Rory,' said this one, 'that you have a wanderer's soul in you like the people of Faa. You might be doing worse than taking the road with us.'

Rory dared not trust himself to answer this, but he stored up the hint in the casket of his dreams, toying with it in the heart-loneliness of night. Not a word did he say to Angus touching his gipsy friends, for he was yet tied to Caray by bonds of love for the gentle people of the islands.

Five days passed in this way, till one morning he set out with Angus from the Inn towards the moor where the tryst was.

'To-morrow, Rory,' said Angus, 'we will be for the road and Caray again.'

'So,' answered Rory simply. The thought of Caray was a poor one after the fine reality of his brave doings and talks among the booths of the market.

'This day will see me through,' Angus went on. 'Wait you for me by the cross-roads when the sun is over the hill of Shotts, for there are two-three matters we must settle between us.'

It was a busy day for Angus, and he had no thought for the lad till the day's bargaining was over. Then, he made for the cross-roads where Rory was to meet him. A great crowd of drovers and graziers was passing southward towards the town, and it was no light task to scan each face in that changing throng. Round and about he looked—but no sign of Rory. For a time, he waited by the roadside—and yet the springy walk of the boy or his thin brown face was not to be seen. The mind of Angus grew troubled. At last he took to questioning the passers-by, but got no word that could help him. Tall lads with thin, brown

faces were not uncommon at the Falkirk Tryst. It was a crone of a tinker woman who in the end gave him a hint of Rory's doings.

'Is't a lad ye seek?' she croaked at him.

'It is that, just woman,' answered Angus.

'A long callan—thin's a lath, with a Hielan' saftness in's face?'

'Yes, yes. The same.'

'Weel, ye needna fash yersel' to look after him. He's aff tae the ends of the earth, and he'll no' be caught. He's tae'n tae the ro'd wi' the gipsy Faas—and they're awa' these twa hours.'

### III

Old Teresa waited patiently, with the long hope of our Highland women, for the homecoming of Rory and Angus. She was lonely and growing old, her croft was spoiling for want of a man's care; she had, forbye, the love of woman for rich, lusty youth. Even on, she watched the Sound for a sight of the patched sail of the mainland ferry-skiff, and when night fell after the long day of fruitless searching, she would murmur for her own comfort: 'He will come to-morrow, surely.' Ten times did she speak these words before there appeared in the red mirk of a mid-September evening the shape of the boat. Her heart beat high.

'He is here now, thanks be to the Good One!' she cried, and throwing a plaid over her sacred head of white hairs, she made down the road towards the bay of Gallachaille.

The skiff was within the rocky jaws of the harbour, as she stepped out on to the moving shingle. Her old eyes peered through the half-light, but not a face could she recognise. Shortly, the keel grated on the stones, and a man leaped from the bows to the shore.

'Rory, little hero, is it you?' questioned the old voice.

'No, nor Rory,' came the voice of another man. 'It is an ill telling, the story of Rory.'

'Angus!' cried Teresa. 'The lad? What has come over him?'

'Wait you, Teresa, wait you,' said Angus gently. 'He is well, thanks be to God. But he is off on his travels with a gipsy clan, and him not telling me he was going to do the like.'

Teresa drew the plaid closer round her face.

'He is off on his travels,' she repeated numbly.

'Just so, just so,' said Angus, troubled at heart. '*Beannachd leis!*'

The old one turned away that he might not see her tears.

'*Beannachd leis !*' she repeated softly. 'He was aye the one to be travelling was Rory.'

Never again was Teresa to see her Rory. The croft grew to be a wilderness of unkempt fields and crumbling dykes ; herself became bent with the rheumatism and blind, a sad heart troubling her always. In the second winter of his absence she died, and was buried in Kilchattan. So was the tale of Rory forgotten with the rotting of the thatch of her house. Folks left the island, and strangers came. Young men followed Rory on the roads of fortune, and the lasses of his time sought service on the mainland farms and married in all airts of Albainn. If the story was remembered, then it was by one or two ; she who could not forget it grew to middle age, a lone and soured spinster in a fisher-cottage at Port Mor. For Mairi had lost her Rory, and found on his going that there was none to take his place. When his name fell out of island talk, it was yet often on her lips, whispered with passionate longing.

The years passed. Though the island and the island customs changed little, the folks came and went, changing always. Mairi saw the love-making of two generations, and sighed for what was past for her entirely. With arms linked the lovers would pass her door as she sat there, a *cailleach* dozing in the sun.

The bitterness of separation went from her in the kindly way of nature ; in her dotage she dreamed only—but always of Rory : whether he was alive or dead, and if dead, the place and the nature of his going. In the end, she could no longer walk to the seat by the door, but must lie prone under the sheets. One day of winter, it was spread abroad that old Mairi of Port Mor was near the end.

Her name passed that night among the men in the parlour of the Inn. Though she was of another age, the old woman was a notable figure for the years of her and the mystery of her single state. Said one carelessly :

'They are saying that the *cailleach* at Port Mor is dying.'

'Do they now ?' responded another, but without interest. 'She is the hardy one surely, her that has lived so long a single woman.'

'Hardy she must be. It is strange that she had never a husband for her bed.'

'Strange it is indeed. I have heard my father—decent man that he was—speak of her ; but God knows that not a word of the story can I remember.'

So they talked lazily in the lamp-light of old people and old days till it was time for them to be moving across the hill to their homes. . . . Neil Gillies, the innkeeper, was redding up his parlour, and his customers were stretching the stiffness of sitting from their limbs, when there came a noise from the stone floor of the passage outside. Shortly the door opened, as if stealthily, and a stranger entered. The island folks stood staring at him boorishly, and only Gillies had the grace to speak a word of welcome.

'It is a cold night, stranger, and you will have travelled far.'

'Cold, cold it is, and dark,' came the reply in a voice of great richness. 'And I have travelled far.'

'Rest ye, then,' said Neil, and was off to get a glass for the stranger.

He was an old man, once tall, but now bent with years. His face was tanned brown, and lined with long buffeting against wind and weather; set deep beneath the high brow were eyes of amazing sweetness and mystery. He was dressed strangely, with something intangibly foreign in his outfit. Long nervous fingers gripped the arms of the chair into which he had sunk. The islanders settled themselves to regard this strange, romantic figure.

'Are you from the mainland, then?' asked Coll Galbraith with the curiosity of the Gael.

'I am that,' said the old man. 'It was rough crossing on this night when the moon had hid her brightness. From Knapdale have I travelled this day, and from strange parts before that. Travelling, travelling—God! But I am always on the road which is in the heart of me. But all the same, I am of the island here.'

'Of Caray!'

'Just so, just so, young hero. Of Caray I am, and back to Caray have I come to seek the end of my long journeying.'

'Your name, if it is not rough questioning?'

'It is not. They call me Rory, and once in Caray, Wandering Rory. Have you heard tell of me?'

'We have not. It will be long since you left the island?'

'A world of years ago, just man, a world of years.' The stranger sighed piteously. 'I was young then, and now I am old. It would be a long telling, the story of my life and wanderings.'

'You will have seen fine places,' they encouraged him gently.

It was thus that Rory came back to tell the tale of his life in the island that had bred him. It was long past the hour of midnight when his voice ceased from its rising and falling, as it related

the strange affairs that had chanced in two score years of wandering. He had them eager on his words—the rare words and fantastic in which he dressed adventure. Many a heart did he cause to beat high with the joy of voyaging, but yet his ending was in a sober key.

‘Wanderer, wanderer—that is what Rory has been his life long. Now I am old, and seek but the end. Yet it is in my mind that there’s aye something beyond, something in which there will be joy forever.’ He paused and eyed his hearers one by one. ‘Is it love, think you, or death?—for I have known not the satisfaction of either.’

There was no word in answer, and the old man rose from his chair.

‘Well, well,’ he said, ‘I have a mind to seek the answer this very night.’ He looked at the men for a moment, then put a question slowly. ‘There was once a lass in Port Mor. Her name was Mairi—’

He seemed to catch the look in their faces, and his eyes shone anxiously.

‘What is it, then?’ he asked sternly. ‘Tell me now.’

‘She is dying, and that’s the truth,’ said one lamely.

‘She is dead, God rest her,’ added Neil Gillies. ‘The word came the moment after you entered this room.’

‘Dead—’ repeated Rory as if not understanding.

He stood for a long time, gazing into the red heart of the peats. Then, as if overcome by sudden determination, he took his blue bonnet from the table, and seized his staff.

‘I am for off, then, lads,’ he said gently, ‘for I am still to learn the meaning of it all. A blessing with you.’

‘Wait you, wait you!’ cried Neil Gillies, making for the door. ‘You cannot be taking the road at this hour of night.’

‘I can that, just man, and I must,’ said Rory, with the fervour of mystery in his voice. ‘There is aye something before me, calling me on, calling, calling—’ And with the words the door closed behind him.

They found his body in the morning, at the end of a trail which ran across the wet fields and over the clean white sand to the water’s edge.

‘So—,’ said Neil Gillies, as they lifted him on to a bier of fencing wood. ‘He kens the truth of it all now.’

## CROW NATURE.

ONE seldom hears a good word for the crow. Nor is this, I fear, altogether a case of a bad name unfairly earned. As a result of lifelong acquaintance with the feathered outlaws, my whole-hearted sympathy is with them. Where the crow is concerned, however, bald fact compels the admission that his character is black as his reputation. He represents his banished kinsman, the raven, in the English woods to-day, and is endowed with a full measure of that bird's merciless craft and evil propensities. At best he is a cruel bird, that is if any creature may justly be called cruel for obeying cruel impulses which are natural to him. Speak of him, and the farmer's wife glances apprehensively towards her ducklings, the farmer thinks of his new-born lambs, the sportsman of his pheasant chicks. Among other wild creatures he is likewise an outcast, recognised as the Prince of malefactors, and feared with a fear such as few birds or beasts inspire.

That fear, by the way, is well founded, for a crow who has grown grey in ill-doing is indeed a terrible old fellow, a far more formidable bird than most people dream of. The tendency is to regard him principally in the light of the egg-thief and scavenger—something of a coward, in fact, dangerous only to the disabled or very young. The most casual study of his habits, however, cannot fail to dispel so erroneous an impression. I wonder how many naturalists have noticed that when a carrion crow alights in a field or in any open space he very quickly has the place to himself. Partridges run, rabbits scuttle for cover, and even the jays, so aggressive in their attitude towards all other furred or feathered marauders, go quietly about their business elsewhere.

This dark ghoul of a bird has not even beauty of form, or melody of song to plead his cause. His flight is laboured and ungainly, his plumage dingy, his voice harsh and proverbially unmusical. And yet, savage, predatory, repulsive as he is, a more remarkable creature does not exist in all the wild. His worst enemy must fain confess him the wisest of birds. How cunningly placed, for instance, is his lofty nest, usually built far out upon a fork of some slender fir bough, or among the topmost twigs of a beech, where the most intrepid human climber may not venture. Cool of head and lithe of limb must be the man who would reach the home of the crow. Of course, there are

exceptional cases. One occasionally comes across nests in the simplest positions. Quite recently I found one in a holly bush, barely five feet above ground. These, however, represent the work of young pairs who have yet to learn wisdom through sad experience. And how admirable is the nest itself! Viewed from the foot of the tree it presents a rugged appearance enough, but closer inspection will reveal it to be a wonderful piece of workmanship. It consists of a stout framework of twigs, interlaced basket fashion so as to support the inner crust, which is built of closely packed clay. But the lining is the masterpiece of the whole thing. This is composed entirely of some animal substance, wool, rabbit-fur, and a liberal percentage of horse-hair, so beautifully woven and compressed, that the effect produced equals that of a spring mattress. Nobody ever peeped into the basin-like hollow where the green brown-spotted eggs of the crow are laid without experiencing a thrill of admiration for the skilful builders.

So well-constructed and enduring is this nest that when abandoned by the owners it frequently serves as a foundation for the more elaborate structure of some other branch-builder, such as a magpie, a squirrel, or even a buzzard. Falcons usually make use of forsaken crows' nests for breeding purposes, without making any material addition; and owls—particularly tawnies—do likewise. A year or two ago a friend of mine, much to his amazement, discovered a young owl in the same nest with four unfledged crows. The possibility of carrion crows acting as foster-parents constituted so novel a situation that some discussion arose upon the subject. The phenomenon was explained in various ways, the most plausible suggestion being to the effect that the tawny mother must have appropriated a new crow's nest—perhaps mistaking it for a forsaken one—and had laid at least one egg before being ousted by the lawful possessors. It may have been so, but it is hard to believe that the crow in such a case would have refrained from demolishing any alien eggs before laying her own. The little owl was considerably younger than its unnatural nest-mates, and my own opinion is that the downling was a captive, seized and carried there for mischief, if not for a more gruesome purpose. The fact that the poor wee fellow had disappeared when the nest was revisited a day or two later goes far to establish this theory.

Apart from his cleverness, which compels at least admiration,

there is one side of crow nature which is seldom appreciated. Owing to the wild ways of the bird, man sees little of its domestic life, and in this setting the crow is excelled by none. Indeed, humanity itself has never produced parent more devoted, or mate more constant than this dusky ogre of the marshes and the fir-grove glooms. Even if wounded, a female crow will continue to tend her young, which, once hatched, are never forsaken whatever danger threatens; and may this be remembered as some set-off against the black account which the bird is often called upon to face.

During the period of incubation when the hen-bird is engrossed with her maternal duties, the assiduity displayed by the male in guarding the nesting grove against all comers is astonishing. Only last spring I spent many an interesting hour studying the eccentricities of an old bird whose mate was brooding in a wooded valley near my home. No man, bird, or beast could pass unchallenged. One afternoon I was fortunate enough to witness a somewhat curious incident. When walking along a ridge which overlooked the crow-haunted coombe, I saw two huge buzzards, most peerless of aeronauts, sailing up the valley, some hundred feet above the tree-tops. I was watching the splendid birds, marvelling at their graceful undulating flight, when, like a tempest, the crow burst up beneath them. Uttering short excited cries, after the manner of a sporting dog when viewing game, he let himself go at the intruders. The buzzards, beyond keeping above him with apparent intent, as far as could be seen ignored his onset. The situation at once developed into a soaring competition, and it was ludicrous to watch the crow's efforts to attain the level of his opponents, so incomparably his superiors at aerial evolution. Why they refrained from slicing him to ribbons puzzled me not a little, for though the buzzard, take him all round, is anything save pugnacious, these two were, for their breed, singularly courageous birds, as I had discovered when studying their eyrie. Every moment I expected to see one or other of them drop upon him, and more than once held my breath at sight of the great female hawk hovering immediately over his head. Neither of them did anything of the sort, however, but, sweeping round and round in that peculiar still-winged, effortless way of theirs, they slowly climbed to a height so dizzy that the crow dared not follow.

I have in mind many instances of crow devotion to mate or offspring, but perhaps I cannot better illustrate this one great

redeeming quality of his than by relating an experience of my own in connexion with a somewhat remarkable pair who for many years haunted some Devonshire woods where I often came in contact with them. It was a wild district, and the crows were characteristic of their domain, for birds more wily and shy never wore feathers. During the winter months we saw little of them, but every spring witnessed their return to the old breeding-place—the same grizzled pair, for the crow, like every species of the *Corvidae*, pairs for life—each season growing more crafty, destructive, and unapproachable.

The wood in which they built was famous for its fauna. There strange birds and animals dwelt. It was the chosen home of the woodcock, badger, and wild roe-deer. Ravens, hobbies, and even peregrines were sometimes seen; also long-eared owls, martens, and polecats. Once the rare and beautiful goshawk alighted there, for which honour we were indebted to a terrific south-east gale. He literally dropped from the clouds, and for days on end we watched him—a poem of grace, breeze-borne in wide circles over woods and valley. His stay was short, of course, and too soon he sought the sunny forests of the south. Each year the sombre fir-trees held some interesting surprise, for you could almost depend upon encountering some rare visitor whose ways one was only too glad to study. But no matter what other creature might disappoint you, no matter what bird or beast might forsake that historic breeding-place, at the period about which I write one great nest was always there.

Sometimes it was so cunningly hidden in the dense crown of a fir that we failed to discover it until the young betrayed its whereabouts. Sometimes it was not found until the birds had flown. More than once, however, I succeeded in reaching it, and inspecting its contents. The behaviour of the parent birds on these occasions was curious. If I were alone they would come about me fearlessly when I climbed, croaking in hoarse resentment, but never attacking me, as angry parents have occasionally done. They were too 'cute for that, though they would settle perhaps on the next tree and watch my movements closely. When a day or two after I repeated the performance, however, with some sure marksman concealed in the adjacent bushes, gun in hand and ready to receive them, they proved fully alive to the situation, and nothing would induce them to approach within range, even if I reached the nest and actually handled the nestlings.

I had always resisted the warfare waged upon the nobler and more harmless birds, but the crows had proved themselves such arrant rascals that, for the sake of the young game and the smaller wild kindreds, I fully abetted all efforts made to destroy them. But the most elusive birds one had ever been unfortunate enough to encounter before were fools compared with these. Every known device for the circumvention of feathered vermin had been put into practice against them. Every farmer in the district had wasted gunpowder upon them at some time or other, but as far as could be seen they never lost a feather. They were too grey in the craft. Guns, poison, and traps had reduced their race nearly to zero, but for that dingy pair of the fir-woods long life and natural death was universally prophesied.

They had for long been notorious as egg-thieves and coop-robbers, but I must confess to having flouted the more serious accusations brought against them, such as their alleged attacks upon disabled animals, the tearing of wool from the backs of sheep to line their nest, and so on. Rumour, ever a lying jade, is particularly so where Natural History is concerned, and I regarded such stories as no less absurd than the cow-sucking propensities of the hedgehog or the game-killing depredations so often laid to the badger's charge. It was mine to discover that I had still much to learn.

One spring morning I was following a mossy track that wandered as if lost through the woods. There is no time like sunrise for studying the wild folk, and that little woodland path with its blind turnings, which allowed you to approach the shyest creature quite unseen, was ideal for the purpose. It was a grand morning, and every living thing seemed conscious of it; so said the indescribable torrent of small birds' song which poured from every thicket, not to mention the rich cooing of pigeons and the more imperiously beautiful notes of the wood-thrush. So breathlessly still it was, one could hear squirrels nibbling at the beech-mast, and even the 'tap, tap' of the creeper's tiny bill, sounding the bark. I had paused for a moment to try to recognise more of the multitudinous voices around me when from a ridge ahead, along which I knew a line of snares had been set the day before, the scream of a rabbit arose, clear and plaintive upon the crisp air.

Now a snared rabbit seldom screams, as this contrivance, if attended to regularly, is comparatively humane. So, suspecting a stoat, the Satan of the little furred people, I slipped a small

charge into my gun and crept towards the place as swiftly as silence would permit. The crying continued, which was not suggestive of a stoat, for 'Stottie,' as the woodmen call him, does his work quickly. I peeped over the ridge, trying to locate the cry, and instantly there was a flapping of big wings, a warning croak, and about two gun-shots away a crow arose and beat off heavily towards the wood. There was no mistaking him, nor the black business upon which he had been engaged. Little wonder that rabbit had screamed so piteously. Held there in the snare it was powerless to escape from its gruesome assailant. Both eyes were gone, but the poor little creature still lived, and even tried to jump away when I picked it up. The crows had evidently had a banquet royal, for no fewer than seven rabbits did I find in a like condition.

I left the ridge in an evil mood and made my way towards the cluster of Scotch firs, in the heart of the woods, where I knew the crows were building. My approach under cover of the gloomy evergreens must have been invisible. I had thought it noiseless also, but long before I got near the nest I heard a startled 'Krrauc,' and just caught a suggestion of dark wings sailing away among the tree-trunks. Nor did I gain another glimpse of the dusky thieves, though I waited for fully an hour near the nest. Occasionally their voices could be heard calling to each other no great distance away, discussing the situation, no doubt, and at length it became obvious that waiting for them was merely wasting time. 'Another day,' I thought, 'we will meet. Then, look out, my friends!' And so thinking I left the place, full of hatred and all uncharitableness towards the crows.

Next evening my chance came. An unusually early return from hunting had left me with two hours of daylight to spare. It is never much use—that unexpected hour or so, after a day when sport has been good, and one is still aglow with stirring memories. You cannot settle to any work, and on this occasion I took a gun and set out to try my luck at the pigeons. The season was a late one. The birds had not started nesting seriously, and one could still shoot with an easy conscience, although April was well in.

Those woods contained some rare spots for pigeon-shooting, and that night I chose a famous place—a spruce-clad hollow where numbers often roosted, and where, by taking a stand under the fir-trees which grew along either slope, with luck one might get them coming in. I had scarcely settled myself when an unmistakable voice called over the tree-tops. From somewhere close

behind me sounded an answer, and I knew that the elusive crows, for once unconscious of danger, were coming near. Next instant through the green entanglement which screened me I caught sight of one of them—the male bird it chanced to be—passing overhead. It was a mere glimpse, certainly, but it proved enough for my purpose, and through the smoke I saw him pitch forward and sink like a stone among the swaying spruces. Through a great fir-top he crashed, bumping from bough to bough, but forty feet above ground a net-work of twigs arrested his fall, and there he hung, a bunch of tousled green feathers, rocked by the evening breeze.

He was obviously stone dead, so, expecting him to become dislodged ere long, I hesitated about expending another cartridge upon him. The other bird had passed unseen and, being scared by the shot, had betaken herself to a larch plantation half a mile away, whence during the next hour her voice could be heard now and again across an intervening valley. Meanwhile pigeons were dropping in, with a continual flutter of wings as they lit among the spruces. At last a couple came winnowing up the hollow within shot, and I stowed them both away comfortably in my shooting-coat pocket.

Twenty minutes passed; night was closing in apace, and early-stirring owls were mewing. A few blackbirds chattered intermittently in the holly-scrub, but save for these the woods were silent now. The pigeons were keeping off again in one of their sudden shy moods, and it seemed unlikely that any more would come in that evening. I was contemplating a move when I heard a bird alight in the wood behind me. It pitched with a clatter too heavy for any pigeon, and some instinct assured me that this was the other crow. Her return was surprising. After smelling powder at close range a wary bird is usually shy of that neighbourhood for days. Why had she come? While still I wondered a call, hoarse, insistent, questioning, issued from the thick greenery which concealed her. Silence followed, and one could imagine her listening intently, then another call, eager and imperative as the first. I was beginning to grow uneasy. There was something in that cry with its wild interrogation which went to the heart with an accusing stab. Then she quitted her perch. I heard the swish of her approaching wings, and next moment she was overhead. It was then that she caught sight of the feathered lump suspended from the fir-boughs. She veered off with a startled

flap, drifted down to a tree about a gun-shot away from me, and there began to caw distressingly. I should never have believed that tongue of bird could utter such a cry.

She fully understood the situation now. So did I, and a thrill of regret such as I had never experienced before passed through me. She was coming nearer, hopping from tree to tree, until she reached a blasted pine, a few yards from that in which the dead bird was suspended. And there she perched, silhouetted against the sunset, calling—softly this time—a husky love-call, but one that had been sweet enough, no doubt, to the ears that could hear it no more. At the first glimpse of her I had raised my gun, but could not get a sight on her in the fading light. Now, though she presented an easy mark, a new feeling restrained me, and the gun hung unheeded beneath my arm. Strangely guilty and out of place I felt, standing there among the dark still pines, while the sad little drama was being enacted before me. The sight of the dead bird had become painful to me. How pathetic he looked, swinging gently to the rhythm of the breeze, his wings drooping, his plumes rumped and crushed among the branches. I could not entirely forget his deed of the preceding morning, but, after all, had he not then merely obeyed the promptings of his own nature? And how wonderful he had been in life, everything considered, holding his own against the whole world. I had shot him to rid the woods of a cruel tyrant, but would not nightfall seem incomplete now without his hoarse voice calling from the fir-groves? Mine had been an act of undeniable justice, yet none the less deep within me was something that would not be silenced.

She spread her wings at last to fly over to him, but already I had witnessed too much for my peace of mind. To scare her away I threw up the gun and blazed at the swinging bird. The female vanished like a ghost into the silent friendly shadows, and the thud as her mate struck earth seemed the saddest sound of its kind I had ever heard. Perhaps it was foolish, but somehow I could not bring myself to suspend him from the ghastly vermin-rail, that gibbet of the woods where thieves of the earth and air hung in various stages of decay and mummydom. Instead I scraped a hole in the loose needle-strewn soil under the pines and buried him there. This done I took my homeward way through the gathering dusk, but ever and anon a distant haunting voice followed me with its accusation. Nor could I divest myself of a

strange depression—or sense of something missing to the quiet woods and the soft beauty of twilight.

Contrary to my expectations, the widowed crow did not quit the neighbourhood. Nightly, as before, I heard her voice, so knew that she still haunted the grove, though for some days nobody saw her. One evening, however, when carrying food to a litter of fox-cubs whose sire had been killed by the hounds, I surprised her, sitting alone and disconsolate beside the nest, in which she appeared to take no further interest. Upon several subsequent occasions she was seen in a similar position, and at last one pink fresh dawn I found her, stiff and stark, beneath the same gnarled fir.

No wound was upon her, nor trace of disease. Was it coincidence? I think not. I prefer to believe that deep in her savage heart lurked a strong true grain of a virtue which far nobler creatures have been known to lack.

DOUGLAS GORDON.

# NATIONAL SPORTS AND NATIONAL METAPHOR.

JOSEPH STRUTT, the first writer to deal historically with the sports and pastimes of this country,<sup>1</sup> begins by saying that 'in order to form a just estimation of the character of any particular people, it is absolutely necessary to investigate the sports and pastimes most generally prevalent among them.' That the national character is reflected in the national speech is equally true, and, conversely, it may be said that the figurative element of the language is a certain clue to the habits, tastes and pursuits of the people speaking it. For nine-tenths of language is metaphor, sometimes fossil, sometimes most living. If we suppose that some ethnologist of the far-distant future, attempting to reconstruct the characteristics of the English race, were wise enough to call in the assistance of the philologist, what would the latter be able to tell him? I think he would say 'These records appear to belong to a race which, besides possessing the common stock of international metaphor drawn from the key industries of primitive man (hunting, weaving, agriculture etc.), must have been particularly addicted to navigation, horsemanship and all forms of sport. They seem to have had a positive mania for hunting, and they certainly much preferred play to work.'

That there is such a thing as national metaphor I think all will grant. The English language has a salt smack. The most stay-at-home Midlander who has never seen the sea can hardly get through the day without using some figure of speech dating back to the Elizabethan seamen, perhaps even to the Vikings. But our nautical metaphor is another story. Hebrew metaphor, with its constant allusions to vegetation and fresh water, the vine and the fig-tree, reflects the preoccupations of a race doomed to wring a scanty existence from the hostile desert. American metaphor, young and sprightly, as befits a young and sprightly nation, tells of the struggle with the primeval forest, the railway, which is man's great helper in that struggle, and the quest for mineral treasure. In the language of the United States 'to be stumped' is to come up against an insuperable obstacle, like the settler whose plough is suddenly arrested by a root left in the forest clearing. 'Log-rolling' reminds us of the communal effort

<sup>1</sup> *Sports and Pastimes of the English People* (1801).

required in building the back-woods settlement, when 'You roll my log and I'll roll yours' expressed readiness to help—for a consideration. The American prefers 'to side-track' (in English 'to shunt') anything that hinders progress, and, if unsuccessful in one direction, promptly 'switches on' to another. The lucky adventurer 'strikes oil': the unlucky one may pursue his fruitless quest 'down to the bedrock.' Such phrases and figures belong to the youth of a nation. A mature race like our own does not easily create new metaphors. Those engaged in a special craft or trade may use its technicalities figuratively among themselves, just as Mr. P. G. Wodehouse's entertaining young men take their imagery from billiards, the motor-car, the bridge table and the golf links; but such figures of speech do not readily establish themselves in the everyday language of the people. Our stock of metaphor has been handed down to us from ancestors more or less remote, and it takes some such convulsion as a world-war to make any noticeable addition to it.

Some think that Englishmen play too much. My own humble opinion is that they now play too little. The grand old tradition contained in the word 'fair-play,' a word untranslatable into any language I am acquainted with, was not created by watching the skill and agility of twenty-two expensive Scotsmen, but by giving and taking hard knocks, the only way of learning to 'play the game'—another untranslatable phrase. Foreign races, especially those afflicted with excessive acuteness, look on pityingly at our devotion to sport and put us down for a stupid race. No doubt they are right. We are stupid. It is even said that we have not sufficient mental alertness to know when we are beaten. I suppose there is no accusation which so rankles with the average Englishman as that of 'unsportsmanlike' behaviour, and the Prince of Wales expressed a genuinely national ideal when, in a speech made last year, he said that 'every child born in the country should have a sporting chance.'

A great deal of our sporting metaphor is not exclusively English. This applies especially to the indoor type of game. Of such games I suppose some form of dicing is as old as any. The obvious 'the die is cast' is traditionally ascribed to Julius Caesar crossing the Rubicon. Less obvious is the use of 'it falls out' for 'it happens,' originally referring to the fall of the dice. The word 'hazard,' now of such wide connotation, is said by a contemporary of the Crusades to have been the name of a castle in Palestine at which a new game

of chance was invented, and the word 'chance' itself, which is Old French for 'fall,' is another early legacy from the dice-box, though the exact meaning of the 'main chance' is obscure. We now usually associate 'aces' with cards, but they were originally the single pips on dice, a fact of which we are reminded by the common expression 'within an ace of,' and by the use of 'the deuce!' to express the dismay of the gambler who has thrown the double ace. Our modern 'at sixes and sevens' appears to have been evolved, with an obscure transformation of sense, from the medieval 'to set on six and seven,' which in Chaucer means something like 'to go nap.' It is even probable that 'no great shakes' was originally applied to an unproductive throw of the dice.

Of equal antiquity with dice is 'chess,' a word which is really the plural of 'check,' which in its turn represents the Persian *shah* (king). The simple metaphor derived from the chess-board has long been used with special reference to warfare. 'Check' for a repulse, and 'stale-mate' for a position in which neither side can take the initiative, were commonly used during the Great War, as they had been used long before. Not all of us perhaps realise that when we 'check' a man's accounts, or forestall his possible dishonesty by paying him with a 'cheque,' we are also using chess-board language; or that the royal 'exchequer' was once the board marked out in squares on which the Chancellor kept the royal accounts. A very popular board game with those who were too godly for dice and too stupid for chess was backgammon, which in Old French was called 'reversier,' and in Dutch is 'verkeerspel,' i.e. turn-game. In English it was also called 'tables,' from the two folding leaves of which the backgammon board was composed. I am not acquainted with the technicalities of the game, so cannot explain exactly what is meant by the familiar expression to 'turn the tables on' an adversary. The obsolete game of lurch, which has given us 'to leave in the lurch,' is supposed to have been of similar character.

From card-playing comes 'above-board,' where 'board' has the archaic sense of 'table,' as still in 'board and lodging.' Dr. Johnson tells us that 'above-board is a figurative expression from gamesters, who, when they put their hands under the table, are changing their cards.' Its natural opposite is 'underhand.' More modern is 'to show one's hand,' in the sense of allowing one's opponent to see one's cards, while the figurative use of 'long suit,' for special ability or advantage, is a coinage of the last few years.

'To lead up to' and 'to force one's hand' are both from the whist-table, while 'to palm off' and 'to foist on,' the latter perhaps from the Dutch word for fist, are card-sharpping or dicing terms. The figurative use of 'shuffle' is of similar origin. 'To play fast and loose' is from an obsolete cheating game with a string or strap.

If we were dealing with American metaphor, this would be the place for a short excursus on the origin and history of 'bluff,' a word from the game of poker, which so far supplies a long-felt want that it has been adopted by many European languages. Readers of Mr. Kipling will remember how the crew of the SS. *Bolivar* 'euchred God Almighty's storm, bluffed the eternal sea.' The Elizabethan word was 'vie,' which has long lost all association with cards. In speaking of a man on whom complete reliance can be placed, we sometimes call him a 'trump.' The figurative use of this word is as old as Bishop Latimer, who, in his famous 'Sermon on the Card' (1529), says, 'Now turn up your trump, your heart—hearts is trump, as I said before.' The use in French of 'ace' for a brilliant airman is a parallel, 'ace' having here, of course, the card sense. Approximating to a 'trump' is a 'sure card,' whence perhaps is evolved the later 'queer card,' as applied to a person, and finally, with ellipsis of the adjective, Mr. Arnold Bennett's 'Card.'

When we turn to the history of outdoor sports, we find a sharp division between those practised by the Norman noble and by the English burgher or peasant. This division is reflected linguistically in the fact that the vocabulary of the tournament, of falconry and of tennis is chiefly of French origin, while that of the cheaper popular sports, such as archery, wrestling and cudgel-playing, is mostly English. From the tournament we have 'to run full tilt,' as Don Quixote did when he 'tilted at windmills,' and we still speak figuratively of 'entering the lists.' But the contribution made by aristocratic sport is usually insignificant compared with that which is due to the people. The tournament declined with the decay of chivalry, and the young noble of the fifteenth century began to forsake the tilt-yard for the tennis-court. This aristocratic game, of which lawn-tennis is but a degenerate scion, seems to have been even more popular in France than in England, if we may judge by its contribution to popular metaphor. 'Prendre la balle au bond' (*i.e.* to take the ball at the bound) is colloquial French for 'to seize an opportunity'; and the fact that the professional keeping of tennis-courts was handed down from father to

son is responsible for the curious expression 'enfant de la balle' for a son who adopts his father's calling. French *volée* and English 'volley' were both probably used of the flight of the tennis-ball before being applied to a discharge of projectiles, and the following passage from Nashe (1596) might almost refer to contemporary Wimbledon :

'One that stands, as it were, at the line in a tennis-court, and takes every ball at the volley.'

To tennis we owe the phrase 'to drive from pillar to post,' though its exact meaning has not been traced. The allusion is to the driving of the tennis-ball, and the earlier order, found in Lydgate, was 'from post to pillar.' This was inverted to facilitate the stock rhyme with 'tossed.' In the old play 'Liberality and Prodigality' (1602), a character is described as--

'Every minute tost,  
Like to a tennis-ball, from pillar to post.'

In John Marston's comedy 'What you Will,' the phrase is used of battledore and shuttlecock, the context suggesting that the 'pillar' and 'post' were names given to the two ends of the court. The following explanation has occurred to me as possible. It is known that modern games have developed from simple beginnings: e.g. fives was originally played against any convenient wall, and the 'pepper-box' of a modern fives-court imitates one of the buttresses of Eton College Chapel. Tennis is supposed to have sprung from a rudimentary ball-game played with simple apparatus in the court-yards of mansions and castles. The entrance gate and the front door would naturally be adopted as the two ends of the court, the pillars of the one and the posts of the other serving as boundaries. Another verb commonly used in this connexion was 'to bandy.' We now 'bandy' only remarks, invectives etc.; but Juliet uses the word in its literal sense, when she says of the lagging messenger--

'Had she affections and warm youthful blood,  
She'd be as swift in motion as a ball;  
My words would bandy her to my sweet love,  
And his to me.'

What the tourney was to the noble we may say that archery was to the commoner; and as it is the commoner, and not the noble, who makes the language, it is not surprising to find that the

bowman's contribution to metaphor far exceeds that of the armoured knight. It must be remembered that during the Middle Ages every able-bodied Englishman was an expert with—

‘The crooked stick and the gray-goose wing,  
Without which England were but a fling.’

After attending divine service on Sunday morning, the craftsman betook himself to the town fields, the peasant to the village green, to practise archery. This was long ago. With the progress of civilisation these irreligious customs gradually lapsed, and the Englishman took to waiting with Sabbath calm for the public-houses to open. The crossbowman shot a short heavy arrow called a ‘bolt,’ which we still use in the phrase ‘bolt upright,’ with which compare ‘straight as a dart.’ This sense of ‘bolt’ also survives in ‘thunderbolt,’ ‘a bolt from the blue’ (the latter, however, adopted by Carlyle from German), and in the verb ‘to bolt’ (i.e. to go off like an arrow from the bow), the further transition to ‘bolting one’s food’ being easy and natural. Our ancestors spoke of ‘making a bolt or a shaft’ much as country folk still speak of ‘making a spoon or spoiling a horn,’ and the proverbial saying that ‘a fool’s bolt is soon shot’ is, I suppose, still good current English. The word ‘target’ is modern in its current sense. The medieval bowman spoke of the ‘mark’ or the ‘butt,’ and such phrases as ‘beside the mark,’ ‘to overshoot the mark,’ ‘not up to the mark,’ ‘wide of the mark,’ all come from archery, the last having been adopted in the elliptical form of ‘wide’ by cricket. We still use ‘butt’ in something like its medieval sense in ‘rifle-butts,’ and ‘to make a butt of’ a person is to use him as the target of one’s satiric missiles. ‘To hit the nail on the head’ now suggests the competent carpenter, but originally referred to the nail or pin which marked the centre of the bull’s-eye. Perhaps the commonest current phrase in which connexion with archery is preserved is that of ‘two strings to one’s bow.’

Archery declined along with chivalry, villainous saltpetre being partly responsible for the eclipse of both. No doubt the crowding into towns, where open spaces were lacking, had something to do with the neglect of the bow. Many attempts were made to arrest this decay. Ascham wrote ‘Toxophilus’ in praise of archery, and Henry VIII founded the Honourable Artillery Company (it will be remembered that ‘artillery’ is the word used in the Bible for Jonathan’s bow and arrows); but all in vain, and this terrible

weapon, against which the musketeers of the seventeenth century would have been as helpless as sheep, survived only as a toy. Legend still preserves, along with Robin Hood and his merry men, the names of Adam Bell, Clim o' the Cleugh, and William of Cloudeslie, as renowned in their day as any prize-fighter or film-star in our own; and I cannot help thinking that the expression 'to draw the long bow' must have originally referred to some venerable survivor of Agincourt fond of favourably contrasting the weapon of his youth with the new-fangled firearms, so apt to 'hang fire' or 'flash in the pan.' Probably 'point-blank,' now associated with guns, really belongs to archery, the 'blank,' or white, being the centre of the target, at which the bowman could, if near enough, 'point' without allowing for wind or trajectory.

Just as the nobleman abandoned the tilt-yard for the tennis-court, so the commoner forsook archery for bowls. The game is ancient, but was always frowned on by Church and State, partly because it led to the decay of archery, but also because it was commonly associated with gambling and knavery. It has given us the expressive 'rub,' *i.e.* 'rub of the green,' for an unexpected difficulty or obstacle, and the word 'bias,' in its earlier use, is always associated with the curving course of the bowl. Shakespeare seems to have frequented the bowling-green. In 'Richard II,' the sad queen, when a lady suggests a game of bowls, replies—

'Twill make me think the world is full of rubs,  
And that my fortune runs against the bias.'

In the Bastard's last speech in the second act of 'King John,' 'commodity' is called 'the bias of the world,' the bowling metaphor being elaborated at considerable length. There were two varieties of the game, known as short-bowls and long-bowls, and the latter was commonly used by seamen of Nelson's time for an engagement at long range. I gather that bowls is now an essentially respectable game, played chiefly by the elderly and sedate. It has handed on its name as a cricket term, the verb 'to bowl' dating from the time when the cricket-ball was trundled underhand like a wooden bowl. To cricket we owe the figurative sense of 'to bowl out,' while 'to bowl over' comes from skittles, the game which took over the more wicked traditions of bowls, including the proverbial association with beer, the combination being taken to represent the workers' Elysium.

Perhaps no form of medieval sport is responsible for more

figures of speech than falconry. Its vocabulary, like that of every branch of the chase, was highly specialised, and most of the metaphors connected with it have long lost their original association. The complimentary adjective 'debonair,' of prehistoric antiquity, probably meant 'of good eyry,' applied to hawks much as we use 'thoroughbred' of horses. Such a hawk would only 'fly at higher game,' unlike the 'haggard,' or untrained hawk, which would, as Shakespeare says, 'check at every feather.' The fore-claws of the hawk were called the 'pounces,' whence the verb 'to pounce upon.' We have long dropped this word in favour of 'talon,' which is French for 'heel' and was used by the medieval falconer only of the heel-claw. 'To reclaim' now means only to reform. In Chaucer's time it meant to call back the hawk after its flight, and the 'lure,' an Old French word for 'bait,' also acquired the special sense of the pipe or call used by the falconer in reclaiming the hawk. Juliet, like all young ladies of her time, was familiar with the technicalities of falconry—

'Oh for a falconer's voice,  
To lure this tassel-gentle back again.'

Two technical phrases, apparently almost synonymous, were used in connexion with the hawk's soaring flight. In 'Macbeth' we read of—

'A falcon towering in her pride of place'

(i.e. at her highest point of flight), a phrase which is also the clue to 'towering passion,' first used by Shakespeare, and revived in more recent times, like so many other Shakespearean coinages, by Scott. The other phrase is 'at full pitch.' Glapthorne, in his forgotten comedy 'The Hollander' (1640), describes Rage as—

'Like a falcon towering at full pitch o'er the trembling fowl.'

We still use 'pride of place' and 'full pitch,' but in senses quite remote from the original metaphor. The verb 'to rouse' is first recorded of the hawk ruffling its feathers preparatory to taking flight.

The fact that an essentially aristocratic sport like hawking should have made so large a contribution to popular speech is perhaps to be explained by its exercise requiring much professional help from the commoner. This is indicated by the frequency of the surname Falconer, Faulkner etc. The same remark applies

to hunting, also a sport monopolised by the noble classes. The simpler metaphors connected with hunting are the common property of the nations, but, in England, fox-hunting is responsible for a special group of figurative expressions. When the historian of the future notes that, in our day, the elect of the people were hustled in and out of the Parliamentary division lobbies by 'whips,' he will conclude, and rightly, that early Parliaments were chiefly composed of fox-hunting squires. Essentially fox-hunting terms are 'to run to earth,' 'to unearth,' 'in full cry,' 'to hark back,' 'in at the death.' Less obvious is 'to give a lead,' i.e. to show the way over a fence to a rider whose mount hesitates. 'To get wind of,' 'something in the wind,' refer to the scent. We say of a man who has met with disaster that he has 'come a cropper,' i.e. fallen on his head, thus preserving an old meaning of 'crop,' of which the only other survival is 'neck and crop.' The variant to 'come a mucker' would appear to allude to the look of the rider whose fall has taken place on miry ground. One who seeks a reasonable excuse for retiring from an enterprise is said to be 'riding for a fall,' and a great philosophic truth is contained in the hunting proverb 'It's the pace that kills, not the miles.' Quite recently the nation was advised by a wise politician 'not to jump its fences till it came to them.' To clear an obstacle 'in one's stride,' i.e. without any change of gait, is also from the hunting-field, and it is a well-known fact that 'a red herring across the track' will throw the hounds off the scent. 'At fault' and 'at a loss' were both first used of hounds, and their disorderly scattering when the scent was lost was called 'running riot.'

Much older than these fox-hunting phrases are some others connected with the medieval chase. 'To beat about the bush' is apparently combined from two phrases of different meaning, viz. 'to beat the bush,' in order to start the game, and 'to go about the bush,' used of a hound which shows no anxiety to tackle the wild animal in the thicket. A dog which missed its birds was said to 'blink' them, whence our use of the verb for wilfully failing to see what is obvious. On special occasions it was usual to enclose a section of the forest with an immense net which prevented the game from escaping. Such a net was called a 'toil,' from the French *toile*, a woven fabric. Hence the phrase 'in the toils.' As the birds or deer were driven, each of the hunting party 'singled out' his victim. A more strenuous and sportsmanlike form of exercise was represented by the 'wild-goose chase,' which

involved headlong riding 'through thick and thin,' Chaucer's phrase for the varying degree of obstruction offered by vegetation to a galloping horse. A 'relay' (French *relais*) consisted originally of fresh hounds, which were 'released' to take the place of those that showed fatigue. The poetic word 'tryst' (meeting-place) is one of the oldest words of the hunting vocabulary. It comes to us from Old French, but its ultimate origin and exact meaning are unknown. Perhaps the oddest and least obvious expression which belongs to this region of ideas is 'to take heart of grace.' This is a kind of stupid and unintelligible pun on 'hart of grease' (*i.e.* fat stag), 'grease' being the word regularly used by the medieval Nimrod in reference to the condition of deer. The two words 'hart,' 'heart,' were spelt alike in Middle English, and there may have been some clumsy attempt to play on 'fat hart' and 'stout heart.' Palsgrave (1536) quotes 'I take herte a gresse, as one doth that taketh a sodayne courage upon hym.' A very modern figure from shooting is the expressive 'sitter,' used of an enterprise offering no more difficulty than the shooting of a bird on the roost. This is much the same as the earlier 'pot-shot,' when, food and not sport being the object, the hunted animal receives no 'law.'

Every Englishman naturally loves a horse, though he knows that he must have his wits about him when he buys one. The slang word 'fake,' of obscure origin, appears to have been first used in connexion with doctoring horses for sale. In the seventeenth century a horse-dealer was a 'jockey,' a word which we now limit to a professional rider. This is simply the northern form of the name Jack. Dr. Johnson defines a jockey as 'a cheat, a trickish fellow,' and from the noun we have formed the slang verb 'to jockey,' *i.e.* to swindle. A curious parallel to this is the archaic verb 'to cozen,' which comes from the Italian *cozzone*, a horse-dealer, defined also in a seventeenth-century dictionary as 'a craftie knave.' In buying a horse it is usual to 'put him through his paces,' just as a raw recruit is 'put through his facings.' If the result is satisfactory, and the horse is found to 'go the pace,' 'without turning a hair,' he may be described as 'thorough-paced.' It is characteristic of the general down-hill tendency of language that we now only use this adjective in describing scoundrels; but Fuller tells us that the Emperor Constantius 'was a thorough-paced Christian.' Some purchasers prefer an 'easy-going' horse—an epithet now more often applied to persons. 'To have the whip-hand,' 'to get the bit between one's teeth,' 'to be saddled with,'

'to get out of hand,' 'to ride upon the snaffle or the curb,' are equestrian phrases of which every Englishman understands the figurative applications. The riding-horse for everyday use was a 'hackney,' or 'hack,' a word now applied especially to the uncreative literary man.

We still occasionally use the phrase 'to bear away the bell' in the sense of success. This is a reminiscence of the time when a silver bell, now replaced by a cup, was the prize for a horse-race. In 1609 the Chester Cup was a bell. Our earliest authority for the word 'handicap' is Pepys, who uses it of a kind of lottery game, in which winners were penalised to the profit of the pool. The name suggests the drawing of lots from a hat. Its current sense is of later development. The golfer's handicap naturally suggests 'scratch,' the mark from which competitors started in a race, and to which pugilists stood up. This has given us 'to come up to the scratch,' almost synonymous with 'to toe the line.' 'To scratch,' erase a name from the list of competitors, represents another sense of the word. It is annoying to find that the horse one has backed has been scratched, because everyone likes 'to have a run for his money.' An equivalent of 'scratch,' in the sense of starting-line, was 'score,' the earliest meaning of which was a long mark or incision. 'To go off at score,' expressing the idea of abrupt departure, alluded originally to what we call a false start. I do not know whether Mr. Lloyd George approves of horse-racing, but on May 24, 1918, he expressed the opinion that 'wrong is often a good starter, but always a bad stayer,' illustrating special senses acquired by these two verbs in sporting language. Chaucer uses the expression 'to start a hare,' and, when we speak of 'starting a discussion,' we are using hunting metaphor. In racing, a 'walk-over' occurs, when, in the absence of other competitors, the single animal traverses the course *pro forma* at an easy pace. 'To weigh in' with an argument likens the disputant to the successful jockey 'weighing in' after winning a race. To horsemanship also belongs the phrase 'to ride a hobby to death,' 'hobby' being, like 'dobbins,' a medieval nickname for a horse. Both words are pet forms of Robert. There are many other horsey expressions, familiar to young men of sporting tastes, but less intelligible to the general public. The slang use of the verb 'to bar,' in the sense of 'to except,' comes from the bookmaker, and one has heard a ploughed examinee or an unsuccessful suitor described as an 'also ran,' though, as the result showed, 'out of the running.'

The least sportsmanlike of sports are those in which animals, human or otherwise, are pitted against each other for the delectation of spectators. The word 'pitted' at once suggests one of the oldest of such sports, viz. cock-fighting, a pursuit to which we owe a good many modern expressions, including the word 'cockpit' for a theatre of strife. We even say of anything superlatively amusing that it 'beats cock-fighting,' and 'to live like fighting-cocks' is an indication of the luxury enjoyed by those favoured birds. 'To show the white feather' alludes to the belief that a white feather in the tail of a gamecock was a sign that the bird would not 'show fight,' or at the best would 'fight shy.' We can imagine the owner of such a failure sadly admitting, 'That cock won't fight.' The beaten cock was described as 'crestfallen.' A general engagement between two teams of birds was called a 'battle royal,' a name given earlier in the Middle Ages to a battle with kings in command on both sides. To this sport we also owe the curious development of the word 'game,' originally an abstract noun with the general sense of 'sport,' which has now partly replaced it. A bird used in cock-fighting was called a 'cock of the game,' then, for short, 'gamecock,' a compound in which 'game' was later felt to have the adjectival sense of valiant, resolute, in which sense it has passed into current English, as in 'to die game.' The less aristocratic sport of dog-fighting has given the phrase 'to set by the ears,' the ear being the favourite objective of the combatants. The French even have a proverb to the effect that a quarrelsome dog always has a torn ear. The hero of many dog-fights became what was called 'hard-bitten,' an epithet which we still use of a tough customer.

In early records we find cock-fighting associated with bull-baiting. The word 'bait' is derived from Icelandic, and means 'to make bite,' a sense still conspicuous in the case of the fisherman's bait. When it was thought desirable to give the baited animal a rest, the dogs were driven off with staves, a practice to which we owe our phrase 'to stave off,' which we now use in quite a different sense. Bulls were baited regularly in all English towns; while bear-baiting was generally practised in the more thickly populated centres. The 'bear-garden' early acquired a character which survives in our use of the word. I am not sure which animal is originally referred to in the expression 'to lead by the nose,' but in a comedy from which I have already quoted (Glapthorne's 'Hollander'), it is said of a character that 'he may be led by the

nose as quietly as the tamest bear in the garden.' Horace Walpole uses 'bear-leader' for a travelling tutor in charge of a 'cub' who needs 'licking into shape.' The superstition that the bear-cub is shapeless at birth and is 'licked into shape' is found in Greek literature, and is said to be traceable in Egyptian hieroglyphics. It is probably from the bear-garden that we get the adjective 'bearish' and the proverbial 'bear with a sore head,' as the animal was not otherwise known to our ancestors. The sport of badger-baiting is responsible for our colloquial verb 'to badger.'

The bear-garden was also the scene of sword-play, cudgel-play, wrestling and pugilism. Much of the metaphor of the sword is simple. Everyone realises what is meant by a 'home-thrust.' Less obvious is 'repatee,' originally a counter-thrust, or the figure implied in the words 'forte' and 'foible,' for a man's strong and weak points. These two words were applied by French fencing experts to the upper, or strong, and the lower, or weak, halves of the sword-blade, and the knowledge of a man's 'forte' and 'foible' was acquired by encountering him with the foils. The homelier cudgel has given us the familiar 'to take up the cudgels' and the expressive 'to cudgel one's brains,' the latter phrase being first recorded, like so much of our modern phraseology, in Shakespeare. Of earlier date than 'to take up the cudgels' is the archaic 'to take up the bucklers,' from the medieval encounters with sword and buckler which preceded scientific fencing. To modern wrestling of the jiu-jitsu type we owe the current 'strangle-hold,' while the medieval form of the sport has given us 'to have the pull of' and 'to catch on the hop,' a recent and meaningless alteration of the earlier 'to catch on the hip,' a manoeuvre apparently akin to a 'cross-buttock.' The 'dead-lock,' when neither combatant can safely let go, is something like the position which the French, like the ancient Greeks, describe as 'holding the wolf by the ears.'

I do not know at what date the bear-garden added pugilism to its attractions. The prize-fights which Pepys saw there were with swords. But the great vogue of the ring in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries has enriched the language with many choice images. Mr. Lloyd George, in 1917, spoke of this country as 'keeping the ring' and 'seeing fair play,' and such a serious paper as the *Westminster Gazette* lately described the powerful interests which choose Presidents in the United States as 'sparring for position,' using a verb which was taken over by the prize-ring from the cockpit. On the day after the Armistice was declared more

than one serious daily headed its leading article, 'Germany throws up the sponge.' During the war the necessity of the 'knock-out blow' was emphasised by the bitter-enders, and the treachery of Russia was felt as a blow 'below the belt.' It has been my recent experience to give instruction in English to a number of highly educated students of French nationality. It is interesting to observe that to these students, who are thoroughly conversant with literary English, most of the expressions which I have quoted in this paper are full of mystery. They would be still more puzzled by the fancy variations which are used in the ultra-sporting language of pugilism, a language in which nothing is called by its name. The eyes become 'peepers' or 'optics,' the teeth 'ivories,' an important part of the internal economy is described as the 'pantry,' and the drawing of vital fluid from an opponent's nose takes the picturesque guise of 'tapping his claret.' From a novel by Mr. Oliver Onions I glean the information that 'chucking up the sponge' is sometimes expressed as 'skying the wiper.' There is really a good deal of imagination in this peculiar language of the ring. What, for instance, could be more expressive than 'in chancery,' for a pugilist whose head is in a position from which it cannot be extricated without serious damage?

It will be noticed that I have made no reference to our two national games. Cricket is not of very great antiquity and was probably at first a local game. What small contribution it has made to our metaphor is comparatively recent. The use of the word 'cricket' in the general sense of fair-play is not in the New English Dictionary, so would appear to be an introduction of the last few years. 'To keep one's end up' is also, I believe, comparatively modern. The five-minute bombardments of our seaside resorts by German destroyers were commonly called 'tip and run raids.' In the *Westminster Gazette* I read recently that 'Mr. Marshall Stevens had two questions down to the Prime Minister. On the first occasion Mr. Neal fielded substitute for Mr. Lloyd George.' Any Englishman understands what is meant, but the metaphor is not in general use. Perhaps the most familiar cricket phrase is 'to score off,' which likens the baffled one to an unsuccessful bowler. I believe that this figure of speech came into use at Cambridge about 1880. Football is now a game of skill. Its medieval ancestor apparently was not. The early allusions to it, from the fourteenth century onwards, are in legal enactments forbidding its practice, the general opinion being well expressed

by Elyot, who, in his 'Governour,' describes it as 'nothing but beastly fury and extreme violence.' It has made, as far as I know, no important contribution to English metaphor, for the figurative sense of 'goal,' as in 'the goal of one's ambition,' is from the foot-race. With the foot-race is also connected the modern expression 'never to look back,' used of a career of uninterrupted success, like that of the runner who leads easily 'from start to finish.' And, by the way, the word 'career' itself originally meant a chariot-race, a sense which is still hazily present to our minds when we speak of a runaway team 'careering' down the street.

ERNEST WEEKLEY.

# BELOVED OF THE GODS.

*When in the chronicle of wasted time  
I see descriptions of the fairest wights.*

FIXED on the marble's mellowed stain,  
As garlands never doomed to fade  
The linked and lovely forms remain,  
The choric dance of boy and maid :  
The frieze of golden youth at play,  
Touched by the morning's rosy fire,  
The fragrant torch of life in May  
No dulling years can tire.

For ever young, for ever fair,  
Their music echoes, far and sweet,  
Light song and laughter free as air  
And pulse of rhythmic feet.  
Yet through the evening's reddened mist  
One change the jealous years must bear ;  
Where ran the frieze the sunrise kissed  
Stand steles, gravely fair.

The fane of Youth, a street of tombs !  
A nobler loveliness they hold  
Hallowed by Time, nor marred by glooms,  
But radiant as of old.  
The haunted beauty of farewell  
Reigns on each brow, austere and sweet,  
Where Life and Love rejoiced to dwell,  
And Death has crowned complete.

E. EARL.

## THE STONY OASIS.

BY STEPHEN FOY.

'THE Arabs call this the Stony Oasis, and say that it is on the road to Nowhere, whither your Excellency wishes to travel,' said my guide dryly. We were in the desert of El Hegerah and he had accompanied me from Koweit, complaining all the way.

'Your heart is hungry for the flesh-pots of the towns,' I said, smiling. 'It seems to me a pleasant place to rest for many days.'

'The season is good and the thought is also,' said old Seyyid sententiously. 'And the Stony Oasis has a story which perhaps I may tell you.'

Every rock and tree in the desert has a story for old Seyyid, and I found him a much more interesting companion than my guide Khasif. I strolled to the pool and looked at the placid water. On three sides it was bayed in by rock, and the low muddy bank on the fourth side was marked by our beasts only. Evidently the oasis was not often visited. Khasif bustled away to oversee the tent-pitchers and the cook.

'The Stony Oasis!' I said, to draw Seyyid's story from him. 'That clump of rocks there looks like the ruins of an afreet's castle.'

'It is not good to talk of afreets when one is in the desert,' said the old man gravely. 'The children of the desert who understand do not love this place. In the old days they did not frequent it much,' he went on in a meditative tone, 'but now that it has another story they do not come at all. Always it has been a haunt of the Doers of Forbidden Things.'

He stopped. The dying sun sent a gleam upon the water, and I fancied that he shuddered.

'What is the tale?' I asked curiously.

'It is time to eat,' replied Seyyid, leading me towards the clump of rocks where the tents were pitched. 'It is a tale of a woman, as all tales are. It is a tale of two men who loved her, and of one who had much knowledge of hidden things. But this place at night is not good to tell their story.'

'You are afraid of afreets?' I said, with foolish contempt.

'He who trusts in God and His Prophet fears nothing,' said

Seyyid proudly. 'You Franks have knowledge of many things, and wide open are the eyes of your minds. But in your soul is a great darkness. I will tell you in the very chamber of the rocks where Banoum lived.'

This is the story that Seyyid told.

Banoum was of the tribe of Essira, of the men who are homeless for ever. In his time he was beautiful as women are never beautiful, with the beauty of strength and the supple grace of splendidly attuned muscles. His walk had the rhythm of music and his eyes the subtle spell of a flute heard in the desert.

He was a stealer of forbidden loves, and wherever he went he sowed hatred. His loves were as the gleam of the lightning, illuminating with a strange new beauty and then vanishing from a blackened ruin. The hearts of all women longed for him, longed with a bitter eagerness which ministered to his desire. Banoum cared nothing for the hatred of men, for he was of those accursed who are lonely in their souls. Yet that hatred accumulated against him for the noblest of reasons, gathered as the thunder gathers for the day of Allah's retribution. It was as the lightning that he had entered their lives, caressing and striking their hearts' pride. And some of them one day came upon the lonely Banoum at this oasis, where the Wahhabees have never penetrated and the law is the law of the desert. As had been his love, so was their hate. They struck as the lightning strikes, leaving him a battered and distorted ruin, whom never woman could love again.

'Never, say I?' Seyyid ground his teeth in the darkness, and his voice rang with deep intensity of feeling, the fine frenzy of the emotional story-teller. Silently Khasif passed him a narghileh. He puffed it steadily, staring into the darkness beyond the palm-trees at the well. His voice was monotonously even and controlled when he resumed:

'Verily no soul knoweth what it shall gain on the morrow.'

For many months Banoum dragged his maimed and distorted body about these desert places, making his home in the rocks yonder, which never echo to the feet of other men. Slowly he regained much of his old strength. Day after day he would look into the placid waters of the well, which spoke of peace to a soul from which peace was forever banished, which showed him that Banoum the beautiful had been transformed into Banoum the brutalised and hideous. Verily his enemies had been cruel to him,

but the hearts of all men whom Banoum had known were happier for the fate which had overtaken him.

Now, amongst his enemies was one whom Banoum had never harmed, but who hated him, as all true men hated him, for his evil loves. And this man again passed through the desert to the Stony Oasis. Banoum sat always at the well, staring at the quiet water. When travellers came he begged of them, and of this man he begged also.

Gravely the traveller gave. He was not rich, and journeyed alone with his daughter: the lovely Leila, whose name even now lends beauty to the songs of the desert, and whom all our young men would choose to be with them in the intoxicating gardens of Paradise. Her beauty was serene and calm as moonlight upon still waters, but her black eyes could melt in a ray of pity or brighten with a sunshine of gladness which would fill the heart of man with but one thought: the thought of Leila.

'Had any man seen her, then, my Seyyid?'

Scornfully he answered:

'Does a man scatter pearls in the bazaar? Verily no man had seen her save her father only. What I tell you of her beauty is known from the songs of Shaibah, Shaibah the very wise, of whom also I will tell you.'

Those three were alone in the oasis. In the evening Leila played and sang to her father Hajji, and Banoum crept near to them. Her voice filled the night with mysterious tenderness and the stars came out to listen. Then Hajji told her that Banoum also listened, and her heart—was it not the heart of a woman?—filled with longing to see him. His story was known to her, as everything is known in the harems, and she came veiled to the door of the tent to behold the man who had stirred the hearts of so many women. She laughed when she saw him, then shuddered and ran back. She was the first woman to see him since the malignity of his enemies, and Banoum now felt the irony of Fate in its full meaning. He who had made so many women faint with love could now only make them shudder. His hand gripped his knife. He could have killed Leila for that unpitying laugh.

Now it came into the mind of Hajji to do a foolish thing. Allah alone knoweth the hearts of men, but surely it was a bitter and a cruel thing that Hajji did when he drew Leila again outside the tent into the soft light of the lolling moon.

'Cast aside thy veil, my Leila,' he said. 'Banoum has seen

many beautiful women, but none so fair as thee. Yet why shouldst thou remain veiled before him, for who could love him now? The love of women can never again be his, so let him feast his eyes upon thy beauty. So may he treasure the memory while he has life.'

Banoum's eyes flashed angrily. Surely this Hajji mocked him as Allah does not permit one man to mock another! Surely—but Leila danced. Her beauty mocked him even more bitterly than the words of her father. Her glances struck like blows upon his heart. It was mockery, mockery, mockery, worthy of the fiendish heart of Eblis himself. Surely Hajji erred with a great error.

The dance was the dance of the daughters of El Ombeh. Slowly Leila came near to Banoum, and from her superb freedom and grace he saw how utterly she despised him, holding him no longer man. She passed and repassed. Her garments touched him, seemed to float round him. Her wonderful beauty quivered through him until every nerve was athrill, and his soul became a lake of molten desire. The dance grew faster and faster. Always she was near him, just out of his arms. Then for one vivid moment her face flashed close to his, and her eyes searched his with laughing temptation. He started up to seize her, but with a thrill of delight and triumph she whirled into the tent, and her father stood smiling at the door.

'Is she not beautiful?' asked the foolish Hajji.

'Verily, thou art the father of loveliness, and she is the mother of delight.'

Proudly Hajji fastened the door of the tent, while Banoum drew his haik closer round him and all night stared fiercely at the still and silent waters of the well.

In the morning as the travellers passed, Leila mockingly unveiled herself and called:

'Peace be with thee, Banoum!'

His soul danced at the sparkle of her eyes.

'Away from thee there is no peace,' he said.

The heat of the desert noon seemed cold and chill after Leila had gone, and he withdrew to this chamber of the rocks where he smoked hashish and dreamed of Leila, of Leila alone with him, of Leila blind to his deformity and loving him. Day after day he dreamed the same dream, and was like to go mad with longing, but no one came to the oasis for many months, and he could not cross the desert alone.

When Banoum had grown weary of waiting there came a

wanderer of his own tribe, who undertook to carry his message to his brother the Sheikh Shaibah, in whom Banoum had a simple, childlike trust. All things were possible to Shaibah, even forbidden things, and he knew that the Sheikh would surely come. Perhaps Shaibah could even restore his old beauty, but certainly could help him to his desire.

Shaibah came. He was younger than Banoum, and even more beautiful than his brother had been. Never had his soul been stirred by the love of woman. In his stern eyes burned a pale flame which spoke of the searcher after knowledge. No mere enjoyer of lovely life was he, basking in Allah's sunshine, and paying for it only by prayer. He was a man of deeds, soliciting the confidence of his mother Earth in order that he might betray her secrets.

The desert men said that Mother Earth had been kind indeed to Shaibah, and that many things were known to him which he dared not communicate to other men.

He loved his brother Banoum with that rarest of loves which men have sometimes for one another. And the evil, selfish Banoum would have yielded his life to give joy to Shaibah. Yet they rarely saw each other, and Shaibah had known nothing of Banoum's evil fate.

Banoum brought him here and poured out all his story.

'Earth does not hold enough torments for these men who have afflicted you, my brother,' said Shaibah. 'But all the curses my knowledge can bring upon them shall work misery in their lives. Truly your quarrel is mine, and I will avenge you.'

Banoum sat silently staring at the grey earth. The very thought of vengeance had faded from his mind.

'Tell me, my brother,' said Shaibah gently, 'is it not vengeance you want?'

'It is a greater thing I ask of you. It is true that I was hungry for vengeance, but now my heart has room for hatred no longer. I love. I love the beautiful Leila, whose eyes are the windows of Paradise, whose beauty is the beauty of the moon shining upon the wind-kissed pool.'

Involuntarily Shaibah laughed.

'Put from you all thought of love, my brother. Thou hast loved too much, and canst never move the heart of woman again. And I have heard that Leila has many suitors, for it is said that she is strangely beautiful.'

'Hast thou no help for me, my brother? Is thy knowledge so weak a thing that it cannot control even the love of a woman?'

Shaibah frowned, but Banoum went on eagerly:

'Canst thou not restore me, my brother? Thou art a wise man and a physician. Must I be like this for ever?'

'I cannot restore thee,' said Shaibah gently, his heart overflowing with pity at his brother's distorted and crippled figure. 'Leave me now to think. My whole heart is thine. What I can do I will do.'

Banoum departed to the well and stared into the placid mirror of his ugliness, while all night Shaibah, in this vaulted chamber, smoked hashish and thought of Leila. The morning came and with it came weariness. Banoum sat still by the well staring now at the shadows of the palm-trees, watching them diminish and then slowly lengthen again to the east. At last Shaibah called him. Together they smoked hashish, and as the drug bathed their souls in splendour Shaibah promised that Banoum should have his heart's happiness.

'Surely for one month she shall think thee beautiful and her love shall go out to thee. But afterwards——'

'Tell me not afterwards,' shouted Banoum in an ecstasy of joy which broke rudely upon Shaibah's somnolent comfort. 'What care I for afterwards if Leila once is mine?'

'Let it be as thou wilt,' said Shaibah wearily. 'I go to do a great thing for thee, a thing I would do for thee only, and not again even for thee. When I have placed the lovely Leila in thy hands I must go to my own place.'

He paused. The soft light of pity was in his eyes as he looked at Banoum.

'Perhaps there may be no afterwards,' he said, and turned to where his boy waited with the camels.

The days dragged wearily for Banoum, filled with luxurious but impatient dreams. One week, two weeks, three weeks passed away, and Shaibah came not. Then came the boy with three camel loads of costly draperies and many men, so that this vaulted chamber was transformed into a lovely harem wherein Scheherazade herself might have delighted to amuse her lord. Again was Banoum alone in the oasis, but the thought of Leila was always with him.

Banoum saw Shaibah coming from afar, and saw the palanquin

which accompanied him. Then he ran to hide in the palm-grove until Leila was housed.

'Where art thou, my brother?' called Shaibah.

Overcome with joy, Banoum ran to him and kissed the hem of his robe. Shaibah snatched it from him angrily.

'Before night thou wilt be alone with Leila,' he said. 'During the promised month thou wilt appear beautiful to her, and her love will be wholly thine.'

'Hast thou seen her?' asked Banoum eagerly.

'She is beautiful as the dawn in the desert,' he said, and his eyes grew wistful and tender.

Banoum stared angrily, and then the memory of his brother's kindness overcame him.

'Take her to thyself, Shaibah,' he said.

Shaibah's wonderful eyes softened still more.

'Love is not for me,' he said; 'she is thine, my brother. But go not to the well when she is beside thee.'

He moved to the camp of his men, and in the early afternoon departed with them. Long after the camels had disappeared Banoum remained staring after them, haunted by the look in his brother's eyes. Had he asked too much? Had Shaibah not only imperilled his soul but lost his heart in the service of his brother?

'I am here, my lord!' The sound of her voice brought forgetfulness. His eyes met hers. He saw in them modesty, love, admiration—admiration of him. And this was Leila who had mocked him, but who now saw in him the very incarnation of love. What miracle had Shaibah wrought? He clasped her warm hand and kissed it. Then his lips sought hers and she abandoned herself to him with a sigh of passionate ecstasy. His heart glowed with mingled shame and love. She did not see him as he was, perhaps, but at least she loved him. Shaibah had promised him a month of happiness. Leila was his.

'Thou hast never kissed me before, my lord,' she said, raising her deep black eyes to his and nestling contentedly in his arms.

Banoum started. Did she then believe him to be somebody else? He pushed the thought from him. At least she loved him and was his.

'Come, my beloved,' he said, and together they went to the vaulted chamber.

For fourteen days Banoum lived in the supreme happiness of

the moment, and suppressed all thought of the future. Never was such a wonderful love as that of Leila for her lord. Sometimes Banoum's heart grew weary as she spoke of things which had happened in Koweit and then of their journey together across the desert. Once she spoke of her previous visit to the oasis, and of the ugly beggar she had seen. He knew then that when she looked at him she did not see Banoum, but another.

No travellers disturbed their solitude, and only the sun and the moon varied the even tenor of their days. On the fifteenth day came the first shadow on his happiness, a mere uneasiness, but a veritable serpent in his Garden of Eden. Several times she called him Shaibah, and each time as she did so she looked at him in a puzzled manner. He did not speak of it, for too surely he divined that the clouds of her illusion were wearing thin. And yet this was but a shadow hovering over their happiness. Together they wandered about the oasis and the wilderness of rocks near at hand, and his soul bathed in the intoxicating bliss of the knowledge that Leila loved him. Sometimes she sang and danced to him, but more often they sat together in contented silence, or she would tell him one of the tales in which our people delight. His long freedom from the pangs of love made this ecstasy the more exquisite. He, who had thought that no woman could love him, again was blessed with the love of Leila, the most perfectly beautiful woman he had ever known. And the marvel, Shaibah's marvel, was that to her he seemed the handsomest man she had ever seen. She had no thought that was not of him, no dream that was not bathed in the idyllic happiness of their love.

So the time passed until the shadows began to withdraw from the face of the moon, and night after night she approached nearer to the perfect circle. Shaibah had only promised a month, but perhaps the Fates would be kinder. On the thirtieth evening they sat together a little withdrawn from the well. Leila's head rested upon Banoum's shoulder, and she lay happily watching for the rising of the moon above the palm-trees. Suddenly she started and pointed to a moving speck upon the desert.

'Travellers!' she said. 'They are coming quickly.'

Banoum grew sick at heart. It was strange that their solitude should only be interrupted on this, the thirtieth day. Was it significant, the beginning of the end? He thought grimly that if ever Leila saw him as he really was she would hate him, and resolved that if ever he saw the light of that knowledge in her eyes, those

eyes should be closed for ever. Involuntarily he scowled and his hand gripped his knife. Leila danced lightly away from him.

'My lord is angry!' she said, and in a moment she stood at the farther side of the well.

'Come, Leila,' he said, 'you must withdraw before they arrive.'

Laughingly she teased him, and forgetful for the first time of Shaibah's parting injunction, he began to run round the well towards her. The moon threw his reflection with fearful distinctness upon the water, exaggerating its real distortion. Leila stared from it to him, and into her eyes came *that* knowledge. He drew his knife and had nearly reached her in his mad fury when 'I hate you!' she exclaimed, with a vivid intensity of horror which stopped him like a blow.

She turned and began to run blindly towards the travellers. The foremost of them spurred his horse and flew like lightning towards them. Banoum could not run. He saw the traveller lift her to his saddle-bow without stopping, and still sweep onwards. Dully he looked at the knife, and as the horse came bounding towards him plunged it into his own breast. The traveller drew up and laid the fainting Leila upon the ground. Banoum opened his eyes.

'Shaibah!' he gasped. 'If I had known . . .' The blood flowed from his lips as his brother bent over him.

'It is best!' said Shaibah solemnly.

It was cold in the rocky hall and I shivered. The wind, which had been rising since sunset, moaned amid the tumbled waters.

'I do not like to be here at night,' said Khasif nervously. 'The Arabs say that the spirit of Banoum haunts this well, and that strange dangers befall any to whom it speaks, for Banoum hates all who can still love.'

'And what does Seyyid say?' I asked curiously.

'Seyyid does not know all things, as do the Franks,' he replied with grave irony. 'Shall I make more coffee?'

### THE ANGLER AND HIS BOOKS.

I EXPECT it is due to the abiding influence of that true book-lover, Master Izaak Walton, that the complete angler of later generations has ever been a book-lover too. It is certainly due to him indirectly that his followers have been animated with the robust spirit of the chase which is a part of book-loving. For Walton's own book, in one of those treasurable seventeenth-century editions which display it at its best, is only to be acquired with great difficulty, and either at great charges or by that mixture of guile and serendipity which distinguishes the complete book-hunter.

I am not sure whether the close relationship between the two sports of fishing and book-hunting has ever been properly worked out. Patience, amiability of address, antiquity of raiment, depth and capacity of pockets, hardihood of constitution to withstand all weathers, a keenness of eye to mark slight indications, whether of a trout rising under a bough or of a bibelot lurking on an upper shelf, a readiness of resource in yielding line by inches, or price by sixpences, a steadiness of nerve in sinking the landing-net or in making a final offer—it would be possible to make out a long list of parallels which would prove that book-hunting and angling are but two manifestations of one temperament. Certain it is that no one pursues the one sport more ardently than the man who has previously been initiated into the mysteries and rites of the other.

There is a special reason for this, apart from spiritual affinities. The fisherman has an amazingly rich literature of his own, and it is open to him to amass a really considerable library of books which deal with fishing and nothing else. It would not be difficult to assemble a thousand volumes of technical interest published since about 1800, nor need it involve any serious outlay of money; for many of these books are to be found on the booksellers' shelves at quite small prices. Books of the 'How, when, and where to fish' type are constantly being multiplied, and so they are generally pretty plentiful, though they evidently find a ready market. 'Books on fishing?' said a bookseller to me one day. 'No, I haven't. When I get any I *sell* 'em.' And he looked at me with the contempt which British commercial knowledge sometimes shows for amateur ignorance. But his was, I think, rather

an extreme case, and as a rule most book-shops can show you a dozen or so of volumes which deal with fishing, though they may not be of any rarity. And there are a few which make a speciality of the real treasures, and which have behind honourable glass a few little volumes that test the authority of the last of the Commandments. That has, however, nothing to do with book-hunting, which is not at all the same thing as just buying books for their proper value. Andrew Lang once wrote an essay which showed very well the difference in the points of view of Dives and Pauper. Pauper buys the books he wants when he can afford them, and he has to do a power of hunting before he finds them cheap enough. Dives buys the books he wants, when they are reported to him, and price matters little. To be just to him, I have no doubt he feels a thrill when he secures something which has eluded him for years, and there is certainly a point at which his desires are hardly more capable of satisfaction than those of his needier brother. For some of those little books in the fishing library are so rare that known copies can be counted on the fingers of the calculator. But never can Dives know the full rapture of the indigent when they come upon something which is not only very rare, but also unrecognised by its temporary owner as being of a special merit.

The most thrilling memories of my sporting life are about equally divided between fish and books, and perhaps I remember the book triumphs more vividly than the fishy. Earliest of them all was the capture of one of the tiny copies of 'The Complete Angler,' issued by William Pickering in 1825 in his series of Diamond Classics. 'Paradise Lost' and the Plays of Shakespeare were, I think, the only other books in English which were included in the series, the rest being Homer, Virgil, Horace, and one or two more of the ancients. I first saw the Pickering 'Complete Angler' in the hands of a school-fellow, and I knew neither rest nor peace until I had acquired a copy myself. When acquired, I fear it somewhat interfered with the serious business of school life, for its small size ( $3\frac{3}{16}$  in. by  $1\frac{5}{8}$  in.) made it possible for it to take cover behind dictionary, grammar, or what not; and many a day, when I should have been pursuing knowledge in more sombre tomes, did I read of 'that very chub that I showed you with the white spot on his tail,' or of the gallant trout that was taken with a worm, or of 'old Oliver Henley, now with God,' and his plan of anointing angle-worms with oil of ivy-berries. Whenever I take that small

book in hand, even now, I get the impression of a magic which could turn a hard seat in a melancholy form-room into a mossy bank beneath a spreading willow, the gloom of a November twilight into a sun-dappled morning of June, and the murmuring voice of him who was 'on' in Euripides or Livy into the music of a little weir. A bad, sad confession, perhaps. And yet not so bad as it seems, for the possession of that little book led to the purchase of all the other little 'Pickerings' in due course, and they in turn were studied, largely out of pride in owning them. But that is by the way. The chief result of that little 'Walton' was, I think, a habit of book-hunting, with special attention to books on fishing, a habit which remains ever strong, though the times grow worse and worse for its indulgence. There are no more of those blue moons during which the impossible takes on possibility, and I realise sadly that the longer I live the further do I get from the chance of a 'first Walton' or a 'Dame Juliana Berners, her Treatyse of Fysshynge,' of the year 1496.

Setting aside these and a few other chief gems of the fishing library, the book-hunter has a wide field for his efforts. 'Bibliotheca Piscatoria,' that most attractive bibliography, compiled by Thomas Westwood and Thomas Satchell and published in 1883, enumerated 3158 distinct editions of 2148 different works published before that date. The supplement, issued by Mr. R. B. Marston in 1901, gave some 1200 more. But the complete list must be far greater even than the total so arrived at, for the great American collector, the Hon. Daniel B. Fearing, was said to have accumulated something like ten thousand volumes dealing with fish or fishing. I have heard that he took a generous view of what might be included in a fishing library, and it may be that some of his books were but slenderly connected with the sport. It is easy to find excuses for this. The 'Poems' of Mr. T. Dermody, as an instance, published in 1800, seem to contain only about four lines in praise of fish or fishing; but the little book has a pretty frontispiece, showing an angler with his rod seated outside his cottage door; his offspring are clambering about him, and he is quite evidently explaining to them how he caught a quarter-pounder which still hangs on the end of his line. I hope Mr. Fearing would have considered this a fishing book. I am afraid that I do!

Then there are other developments for which I should be glad to have so famous a collector's approval. Sir Thomas Browne, in his miscellany writings, dealt with the fishes mentioned in

Scripture, and also with certain fishes found in Norfolk. That fact, of course, makes his miscellany writings part of our affair. Does it also make 'Urn Burial' a fishing book? Can we properly claim that masterpiece of prose as the special property of the angler? I know how I have answered the question to myself; but I hesitate a little to make a very public claim to the book in the teeth of indignant antiquaries or outraged men of medicine. The principle, however, remains that anyone who has treated of fishing or fish is a fishing author, and it is at least arguable that his other works, though ostensibly fishless, are our legitimate concern if we wish it. The argument pleasantly widens the field for our book-hunting, and greatly increases the possibility of an occasional worthy capture. For there are few authors of note who might not thus be brought within the meshes of our landing-net.

Some, no doubt, would take a stricter view of the matter, and would exclude volumes which in themselves are extraneous, while admitting whatever their authors have written elsewhere *de re piscatoria*. Even in that case there is a remarkable wealth of literature presented for their enjoyment, both in the collecting and in the reading. Not many of the other secondary human activities can show such a library, and certainly no other field sport can approach it for either quantity or quality. Fishing not only has its own special books, but it has invaded other departments of letters, and you find it in quite unlikely places, in the Elizabethan drama, in lyric and epic poetry, in philosophical meditation, and even in pietistic disquisition, and naturally it is prominent in what may be called the 'household' books of our forefathers, the popular domestic encyclopedias of which there were so many in the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Charles Estienne in France, Johann Coler in Germany, G. Baptista Porta in Italy, and Gervase Markham in England, are perhaps the authors most prominently connected with this class of literature, but there were many others. The simple method of authorship, which consists chiefly in reprinting another man's book, after you have added a few words to it (your own name prominent among them), has greatly increased the number of writers to be studied and collected. It was apparently quite a convention of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries to appropriate books in this way, and the household books seem to have been specially liable to such treatment, doubtless because they had a big market.

The angling library contains one book which must constitute something like a record in cool plagiarism. This is 'The Angler: A Poem in ten Cantos,' which was published by T. Gosden, the well-known sporting bookseller, in 1819 and 1820. It was brought to him by an ingenious gentleman named T. Lathy, and so impressed him that he spent large sums on its production, adorning it with woodcuts (one of them a portrait of himself), and issuing some copies on large paper, and one specially 'luxurious' example on vellum. He gave Mr. Lathy £30 for the copyright, an appreciable sum in those days. The book was, as a matter of fact, nothing more than a transcription of 'The Anglers: Eight Dialogues in Verse,' which appeared anonymously in 1758, and was later reprinted in Ruddiman's 'Collection of Scarce and Curious Pieces' (1773, 1785). Mr. Lathy added a little feebleness to the original, and altered it slightly, and his recompense was more than adequate. I have never been able to find out when and how Gosden learnt of the deception that had been practised on him, but it is possible that the secret lay hid for some time. The original book must have been very little known for Ruddiman to think it appropriate to his collection, and it is likely that its reappearance there caused no stir in the sporting world.

But there is one remarkable thing about it, and that is that 'The Anglers' is a striking book. Its versification is easy and polished, its knowledge of fishing is profound, and it contains real humour and some wit. How it escaped appreciation so long—it is, indeed, almost unknown even now—I cannot understand. It has been attributed to Dr. Thomas Scott, a dissenting minister of Ipswich, whose other title to fame is a metrical version of the Book of Job which was lauded at the time of its appearance. That achievement does not, however, throw much light on 'The Anglers,' though it may help to explain its anonymity. I regard it as one of the most noteworthy volumes in the fisherman's library, and it is a pity that it has never been reproduced in some easily accessible form. Probably not one in a hundred readers of to-day has ever heard of it. Only collectors, indeed, would have much chance of making its acquaintance, and even they would have difficulty in doing so. The original edition, at any rate, is quite rare.

A similar disability attends many other fishing books which are well worth reading. Some of the old ones have never been reprinted at all. Others have been reprinted only in limited editions and the very reprints have become the collector's affair. J. H. Burn in or

about 1820 republished a few, Gosden did one or two, and there were other revivals of a few old books during the nineteenth century. But they are not easy to find now, and one has to hunt for them almost as assiduously as for the earlier editions. The reason for the small circulation of a decidedly interesting and 'human' type of literature is, I suppose, that the antiquarian spirit animates only a small portion of any fraternity, and students of old fishing books are comparatively few, though readers of modern fishing books may be many. But I should say that it might be possible to gather together enough enthusiasts here and in the United States to form a society for reprinting some of the old treasures. The plan answers very well in regard to other branches of scarce and curious literature. The work of the Bibliographical and similar societies shows what can be done.

Modern editions are not, of course, quite the same as old ones to the ardent collector. There is a magic about the old stained pages, the worn leather or vellum bindings, which affects one like music or the scent of flowers. With the little volume in one's hand one is in actual touch with the past and is, as it were, taken back to an older and simpler world. It may be even that one actually meets the men of that world. I possess a copy of Gervase Markham's 'Country Contentments' (fourth edition, 1631), which contains 'the Whole-some Experiences, in which any man ought to Recreate himself after the toyle of more serious Businesse. As namely, Hunting, Hawking, Coursing with Grey-hounds and the lawes of the Lease, Shooting in Long-bowe or Cros-bowe, Bowling, Tennis, Balloone, the Whole Art of Angling, and the use of the fighting Cocke.' It belonged aforetime to *Ignotus*, and he kept it clean. Possibly he read in it but little. I find no trace of him in or about the pages which deal with the earlier 'contentments.' Hounds, hawks, cross-bows, tennis and baloone seem to have left him unimpressed and he set down no comment for good or for ill. But when he came to page 59, and 'The whole art of Angling, as it was written in a small treatise in rime, and now for the better understanding of the reader put into prose, and adorned and enlarged,' his heart burned within him and he wrote with his pen. 'Give mee fishing!' he exclaimed, and there his exclamation stands to this day. Possibly it is the only message he left for posterity. Very likely his tombstone no longer displays the name by which he was known while he still walked beneath the sun, and he is but one among the unremembered dead. Yet he has achieved a kind of immortality. So often as his heart's cry

shall come under the eyes of later men who share his enthusiasm, so often will he be brought to life in their imaginings, he and his angle-rod made from 'a fine growne ground witcher, or a ground elme,' his line of hairs from 'the fastest, soundest, and proudest horse' to be found, his cork cut 'into the fashion of a long Katherine peare,' his hooks of 'divers shapes and fashions,' and all his other tackling. For his appearance, we may go bail that he wore sober-hued raiment, 'plain and comely, of a darke colour, as russet, tawny or such like.' It fitted him close, 'without any new-fashioned slashes, or hanging sleeves, waving loose, like sailes' about him. He did not want to frighten the fish, or to be caught up in his own snare, so he would dress suitably.

As for his countenance, we know very well that it was good to look upon, the mirror of no ordinary mind, for he was an angler in the seventeenth century, and that meant much. Here is some of its meaning set down in *Ignotus's* own book.

'Now for the inward qualities of the minde, albe some writers reduce them into twelve heads, which indeed whosoever injoyeth cannot chuse but be very compleat in much perfection, yet I must draw them into many moe braunches. The first, and most especial whereof, is, that a skilfull angler ought to bee a generall Scholler, and seene in all the liberal sciences, as a gramarian, to know how eyther to write or discourse of his art in true and fitting termes, eyther without affectation or rudeness. He should have sweetnes of speech, to perswade and intice others to delight in an exercise so much laudable. He should have strength of arguments to defend and maintayne his profession against envy or slaunder. Hee should have knowledge in the sunne, moone and starres, that by their aspects hee may guesse the seasonablenesse or unseasonablenesse of the weather, the breeding of stormes, and from what coastes the windes are ever delivered. Hee should be a good knower of countries, and wel used to high wayes, that by taking the readiest pathes to every lake, brooke, or river, his journies may be more certayne and lesse wearisome. He should have knowledge in proportions of all sorts, whether circular, square, or diametrical, that when he shall be questioned of his diurnal progresses, hee may give a geographical description of the angles and channels of rivers, how they fall from their heads, and what compasses they fetch in their several windings. . . .'

Skill in mathematics, in music (so that he may dispel melancholy 'with some godly hymme or antheme'), love to his sport and to his neighbour, patience and good temper, humility of thought and

posture (for dibbling, no doubt), valour ('neither to be amazed with stormes, nor affrighted with thunder'), liberality in disposing of his catch, easy content, ready gratitude, retentive memory—these are other qualities to be found in the angler, who, lastly, must be 'of a strong constitution of body, able to endure much fasting, and not of a gnawing stomacke.' Truly *Ignotus* must have been a man worth knowing, and we, in this less ambitious age, can only marvel at his completeness, and, marvelling, do him honour. It is good to have a link with such a paragon.

Marginal comment is sadly rare in these old books, and when it occurs it is generally of a severely practical nature. Old recipes for bait or, at a rather later period, lists of artificial flies, are the principal additions that one finds. They may be of some technical interest; but they do not help one to appreciate the character of the commentator, or even to realise the quality of his sport. The personal touch is absent from them. I have one or two old books which give rather better returns in this way. 'Don't swear or you'll catch no fish,' observes an eighteenth-century moralist in the margin of a copy of Walton's 'Compleat Angler,' a piece of advice which indicates a well-intentioned man, though we have no means of knowing whether he was always able to restrain his impulses or whether he spoke from sad experience.

In some of the big libraries there may be manuscript treasures which would increase our knowledge of the anglers of the past. It is not very long since Mr. Henry Nicoll discovered and gave to an appreciative world the 'Fishing Diary' of the Rev. Richard Durnford, who lived at Chilbolton and fished the River Test in the early years of the nineteenth century. This is an extremely interesting book, for it shows what *scientific* trout fishing was like over a hundred years ago, and, by inference, a century before that—for there was almost certainly less development between, say, the time when Charles Cotton published his part of 'The Compleat Angler' (1676) and the beginning of the nineteenth century, than there has been since. Trout fishing entomology, as we understand it now, did not really begin to be an accepted science till Alfred Ronalds published his great book in 1836. But the records of Mr. Durnford show that here and there anglers knew a good deal about it and applied their knowledge to good purpose. No doubt Charles Cotton's diary, if it existed, would display the same careful observation and minute attention to detail, and probably the notebooks of the author of 'The Art of Angling Improved in all its Parts, especially Fly-

Fishing' (Worcester, *circa* 1760) would be similarly instructive. Whether that author was Richard Bowlker, or Charles his son, is uncertain, but he was certainly a fly-fisher of the observant kind.

The personal note which I desiderate in marginal comment is scarce also in the printed pages of many of the earliest fishing books, except in so far as quaint phraseology and artless style reveal the character of their authors. They are manuals pure and simple. But some of them contain occasional delightful touches. Who could resist dear old Thomas Barker, who published his queer little book, 'Barker's Delight,' in 1657? 'Noble lord, I do present this my book, as I have named it, Barker's Delight, to your honour. I pray God send you safe home to your lady and sweet babes. Amen, Amen.' Who is there but would give much to be able to accept this invitation in person?—

'If any noble or gentle angler, of what degree soever he be, have a mind to discourse of any of these wayes and experiments, I live in Henry the 7th's Gifts, the next-doore to the Gatehouse in Westm., my name is Barker, where I shall be ready, as long as please God, to satisfie them, and maintain my art, during life, which is not like to be long; that the younger frie may have my experiments at a smaller charge than I had them, for, it would be too heavy for every one that loveth that exercise to be at that charge as I was at first in my youth, the losse of my time, with great expences.'

Another extraordinary old book, which is a mirror of its author, is 'The Genteel Recreation' by John Whitney, printed in 1700 for private circulation, and reprinted by J. H. Burn in 1820. It is a poem of incredible badness. Indeed it is so abominable as poetry that it deserves to live for ever on that account alone. *Nemo repente fuit turpissimus*. It demands a kind of genius to achieve the deepest depths, an infinite capacity for rejecting better thoughts one by one. It is difficult, indeed, even to quote Mr. Whitney, so limping is his muse. Let the beginning speak for him:

'Happy 's the man blest with a moderate state:  
His grandsire's land devolv'd to him by fate,  
And constant there remains,  
Bound fast by law's strong adamantine chains,  
He gently can survey his meads, and be  
Spectator of his own felicity;  
Those curious meads  
New pleasure breeds,

A purling brook just by,  
Where the inhabitants  
Of all the watery elements  
Strive nature to out-vie.'

There is positive pleasure in reading this sort of thing for its own sake. And Mr. Whitney adds to the pleasure by being autobiographical here and there :

'But with a sudden jerk his tail did turn,  
And then as suddenly my joys were gone,  
For my new strand gave way and broke,  
But what's become of worm and hook ?  
For both I'm sure he fairly took.'

The whole poem abounds in personal touches, and also in geographical allusions to ponds and streams in the southern counties. But perhaps the choicest thing in the booklet is the dedication 'To my Honoured Friend, John Hyde, Esq.,' which is a monument of fulsome flattery, inspired by 'the liberty you gave me this last summer to angle in your great pond at Winckhurst . . . where in one day we caught about twenty brace of extraordinary large carps with very sweet eeles and tench.' If one does not know Mr. Whitney very well after reading his book, it is not for lack of self-revelation on his part.

It is not, of course, necessary to cite Izaak Walton as a fishing writer who reveals himself as well as his art. His book has become a classic for that very reason. But it is permissible to refer to his only enemy, who is less well known. This was Richard Franck, *Philanthropus*, who published an extraordinary fishing book in the year 1694, entitled 'Northern Memoirs, calculated for the Meridian of Scotland . . . Writ in the year 1658, but not till now made publick.' Franck was one of Cromwell's soldiers, and probably as iron-sided as most of his fellows. His book certainly displays a remarkable character. 'When you see a head, hit it !' might very well have served him for a motto, though in practice his desire to deliver a really resounding blow spoilt his aim. The amazing turgidity of his style confuses the reader so much that he has difficulty very often in discovering what meaning is wrapped up in it. But it is quite clear that he had a cordial animosity to Izaak Walton : 'For that end you may dedicate your opinion to what scribbling putationer you please ; the "Compleat Angler," if you will, who tells you of a tedious fly story, extravagantly collected from antiquated

authors . . . ' I am quite sure that 'scribbling putationer' is in no way intended to be complimentary, though I should be very sorry to have to say what it means. Yet in spite of the fact that he abuses Walton to the best of his ability, one cannot help liking Franck. Save in his choice of words, there is no nonsense about him, and he certainly knew more about salmon, their habits, and the ways of catching them, than any other writer of his time. Some of his contemporaries were still firmly convinced that when a salmon wished to surmount a fall it put its tail in its mouth and sprang upwards by the forces of elasticity, as does a willow-shoot whose ends are bent together and then suddenly released. Though Franck says that a salmon when hooked makes 'the water swell with ebullitions,' I do not think he would have tolerated the elasticity notion. Even if he had, he would inevitably have described the process so that nobody would have had an idea what he was driving at, which might perhaps be accounted to him for merit. But in any case Franck is to be treasured, for he is a recognisable personality, and not a mere pen. And, moreover, he brought a great name into the angler's library. The edition of 1821 (the only one ever likely to come the way of ordinary folk) was edited by Sir Walter Scott, who contributed an interesting preface.

The temptation to wander from shelf to shelf and from book to book is great, for the fishing library contains a multitude of curiosities. But random quotation leads no whither. Perhaps I should do better to indicate one or two wells of knowledge from which a reader may draw up draughts of old learning for himself, so extending his acquaintance with the older angling authors, and perchance stimulating his ambition to amass a collection of their works.

First, of course, there is 'Bibliotheca Piscatoria,' which I have mentioned before. It has some small defects of arrangement and indexing, but otherwise it seems to me a model of what a bibliography should be. Besides recording facts it gives brief literary and technical appreciations of many books which are very satisfying. The manner of this annotation is adapted to circumstances. 'Coarse and Cockney,' says the editorial pen of one book. In mentioning another it glides into what is, to my mind, one of the most satisfying pieces of prose in the language :

'The English poets of the Art of Angling perplex us neither with their multitude nor their magnitude. To some three or four of them may be assigned a place—shall we say midway, by

courtesy?—on the ledges of Parnassus; the rest are innocent of all altitudes whatsoever, except those of Grub-street garrets; or the stilts of an absurd vanity.

'Foremost among the select few, by right of seniority, and perhaps by poetic right as well, we have "I. D.," who, in the cool dawn of the seventeenth century, and when the Elizabethan men were passing, one by one, into the shadow, "sang to the echo" (for he seems to have had no other audience in his own day and generation) these "Secrets of Angling," himself being destined to become a greater secret than any he revealed.'

Thomas Westwood, who wrote this, was in his boyhood a friend of Charles Lamb, and he has here and there left some very charming memories of Elia and Bridget. Some of them are to be found in a delightful little book, 'A Literary Friendship,' which is a collection of Westwood's letters published by the recipient, Lady Alwyne Compton, a few years ago. Others are to be found in *The Angler's Notebook*, a magazine of which two series appeared, in 1880 and 1887. They are to be found sometimes bound up in sober green covers, and they are as necessary to the student of fishing literature as is 'Bibliotheca Piscatoria' itself, for they contain a number of bibliographical and literary articles by Westwood, Satchell, Skeat, Alfred Wallis, and other distinguished men, and they maintain a very high level of knowledge and style. Westwood himself was not the least in an eminent company. He was a true man of letters and a considerable poet, though he has left too little behind him.

There are a few books on fishing literature, and also a good many detached or casual papers which are of some importance. Dr. Bethune, the American editor of Walton, dealt with the subject at some length in his preface. Robert Blakey has left a volume on the 'Fishing Literature of all Nations' (1856) which 'Bibliotheca Piscatoria' roundly condemns as 'a slipshod and negligent work, devoid of all real utility.' It is a bad book, but it contains some curious matter. Dr. C. D. Badham's 'Fish Tattle' (1854) is a queer and learned production which is relevant to our business. But I believe that there is a rod in pickle for Dr. Badham, and that something will soon be subtracted from the depth, height and width of his apparently encyclopedic researches. It is not my thunder, however, so I say no more than that the curious may expect a piquant revelation before long. 'Angling Literature,' by Osmund Lambert (1881), is a sound little book so far as it goes, but it is not much more than a long essay. Mr. R. B. Marston's 'Walton and

the *Earlier Fishing Writers* (1894) displays the knowledge and enthusiasm that might be expected from its author, who has done so much both for the sport and its literature. *The Fisherman's Magazine* (1864, 1865), edited by H. Cholmondeley Pennell, contained some interesting papers on fishing books, and there have been other detached essays in various periodicals, as well as in the proceedings of some of the important fishing clubs. In fact there is material for quite a collection of documents in this kind alone.

In the present century we have had one or two contributions of special merit. One is Dr. W. J. Turrell's 'Ancient Angling Authois' (1910), which is a careful study of old writers from the technical point of view, and is indispensable to the collector who wishes to read them intelligently. Dr. Turrell has done good service in rescuing several worthy writers from oblivion, especially John Taverner, author of 'Certain Experiments concerning Fish and Fruite,' (1600). He had been practically 'lost,' but Dr. Turrell rediscovered him and showed that he is entitled to a good deal of honour as a pioneer in several branches of fishing knowledge. Another recent book is Dr. H. M. Hall's 'Idylls of Fishermen' (New York, 1912), which deals with a special and curious part of fishing literature, the 'piscatory' poems of the idyllic kind which were fairly numerous for two or three centuries. They were a very artificial growth, and the English examples of them by Phineas Fletcher, T. Heyrick, Moses Browne and one or two others, are not extremely stimulating to either literary or angling appetite. Still they are interesting, and add to the collector's opportunities. It is, by the way, on record that Ben Jonson had some intentions of writing something in the piscatory vein, but though there are traces of matters fishy in his works, he did not write the projected volume. It is a pity, for he would have added lustre to the library.

In concluding this cursory survey of a big subject, I must diffidently mention one more book which has just appeared, Mr. Eric Parker's 'An Angler's Garland,' published by Philip Allan and Co. This is not a bibliographical or technical study but a treasury. I should be tempted to call it a golden treasury, only my motives might be misunderstood. Ingenious readers are apt quickly to discover traces of alloy, and I must confess that this treasury mentions my own name more often than the gold standard would permit. Setting this fact aside, however, (apologising for it, if you will,) I would describe Mr. Parker's pretty little book as essentially one for the zealous collector of fishing literature. It tells him what

he must collect, not by the bald method of injunction, but by the more insidious plan of suggestion. A passage from an author is placed before him without comment and without eulogy or blame, and he is left to make his own account with it. The natural result, of course, is that he straightway begins to search for that author's book in order that he may enjoy more writing of the same kind.

Treasuries of quotation are sometimes too scrappy to be satisfactory, but Mr. Parker has been generous in his extracts, and he gives quite enough for students to be able to test the work of the authors whom he has brought together. And what a goodly company they are ! I think the wealth of the angler's library has never before been so plainly demonstrated, for the compiler has often left this beaten track and culled rare flowers from the by-ways of literature. Occasionally these flowers grow on the way to the waterside rather than at the river's brink, but one cannot complain of that. When Browning sang

'The year 's at the spring,  
And day 's at the morn ;  
Morning 's at seven ;  
The hill-side 's dew-pearled . . . ,'

he certainly sang a fishing song, though it may be a quarter before eight before we breast the last ridge and actually come into view of the upland loch.

I cannot attempt to quote a representative selection of gems from the book, but here are a few of the artificers who have set them :—Addison, Matthew Arnold, William Basse, Nicholas Breton, John Donne, Michael Drayton, John Gay, William Hamilton, James Hogg, Washington Irving, Thomas Love Peacock, William Shakespeare, Tobias Smollett, James Thomson, and William Wordsworth. All these are in addition to what may be called the specialist writers, some of whom are of the highest excellence as masters of style. Nor has Mr. Parker exhausted the lists of the mightier names. His collection, wide and varied as it is, does not include them all. Chaucer, John Gower, Spenser, Herrick, Quarles, Bunyan, Sir Thomas Browne, Robert Burton, Beaumont and Fletcher, Ben Jonson, Philemon Holland, John Selden, Robert Boyle, and not a few others of the older men, are to a greater or less degree necessary to the complete angling library, while among the moderns there are hundreds, from writers of the last century like R. D. Blackmore and Mark Twain to the most modern novelists.

So there is really no end to it and the collector, be he never so serendipitous, will always have something more to find.

It says much for the character of the sport which has inspired so much pen work, that no matter how vast the library becomes, no matter how strongly the greater names tempt one to stray from the river bank to fresh woods and pastures new, one is always lured back by the simple charm of one or other of those honest old writers to whom fishing was the heart of life, the soul of a book. And at times one is moved to declare that surely no one ever wrote better about anything than some of these brothers of the angle about their sport. Let the last stanza that John Dennys 'sang to the echo' serve me as both example and conclusion :

'And now we are arrived at the last  
In wished harbour where we mean to rest,  
And make an end of this our journey past;  
Here then in quiet Road I think it best  
We strike our sailes and stedfast anchor cast,  
For now the sun low setteth in the West,  
And yee Boat-swains, a merry Carroll sing  
To him that safely did us hither bring.'

H. T. SHERINGHAM.

## SCIENCE OR SUPERSTITION.

'THE OTHER SIDE.'

BY HIS HONOUR JUDGE BODKIN.

ALL the world is eager for authentic description of the life beyond the grave, and there is danger that such eagerness may degenerate into credulity. 'The wish,' the great poet philosopher tells us, 'is father to the thought'; the child is apt to yield a too implicit obedience to the father. It therefore behoves us to exercise extreme caution in estimating the claims of spiritualism to furnish us with a knowledge of the 'other side.' The table rapping and turning, and other marvellous conjuring feats of the mediums must be disregarded. No explanation has been offered as to how or why these marvels are performed. No spiritualist, so far as I know, has ventured to suggest that they bring comfort to the afflicted or increase our knowledge of the regions beyond the grave.

The alleged phenomena of thought-reading (or telepathy), of disembodied apparitions, and of communications by means of 'planchette,' 'ouida board,' or the 'direct voice' may be taken as the true tests of the progress and value of the 'science' of spiritualism.

Sir Oliver Lodge considers the fact of telepathy to be conclusively established, and he cites several proofs within the range of his own personal investigation.

He gives a very elaborate description of his experiments with two young ladies, Miss R. and Miss C., 'who on many occasions were able to name or draw, more or less accurately, objects which they had no opportunity of seeing.' The agent looked at the object which was carried in from another room and the percipient described or drew it. There were a good many failures in the description, and the drawings in many cases but faintly represented the objects.

Two observations of Sir Oliver Lodge's are worthy of notice. 'I was anxious,' he writes, 'to try both percipients at once so as to compare their impressions, but I have not met with much success under these conditions, and usually therefore have to try one at a time.' He further noticed that the success was much greater in drawing a simple object that had a name than in copying a nameless figure.

If the percipients were able, as Sir Oliver Lodge believes, to see mental pictures of the objects on which the agents fixed their eyes, these failures would be inexplicable. But assuming, if one may do so without offence, that the feats were performed by a successful signalling, it would be awkward to have the two percipients perceiving at the same time, and it is quite plain that a simple object with a name would be easier to signal, though not easier to see, than an arbitrary figure.

Sir Oliver Lodge indeed assures us of the good faith of the percipients. As regards collusion and trickery he writes :

‘No one who has witnessed the absolutely genuine and artless manner in which the impressions are described but has been convinced of the transparent honesty of purpose of all concerned.’

But he confesses that his belief is not evidence, and an outsider may be pardoned for the suspicion that two high-spirited, mischievous girls might, in the language of Professor Barrett, enjoy the sport of ‘bamboozling the professor.’

He gives a further account of two adult sisters performing somewhat similar feats, but he found after many experiments that neither sister could play the game with a stranger, and that success was possible only when their hands were in contact. These facts do not suggest collusion to Sir Oliver, he has a much more recondite and mysterious explanation. He writes :

‘My impression therefore is that there is some kind of close sympathetic connection between the sisters so that the idea may, as it were, vibrate through their minds when their hands touch, but that they are only faintly, if at all, perceptible to the influence of outside persons.’

Sir Oliver may be always trusted to prefer the supernatural to the normal explanation.

When in another place he tells us how Mrs. Piper’s control, Dr. Phinuit, was able to read some part at least of a letter placed on the top of the head of Mrs. Piper, it never for a moment occurs to him that Mrs. Piper might have secured an upward squint at the document. Nor is his faith in medium or control diminished in the slightest degree when Dr. Phinuit fails utterly in another experiment of which he gives the details.

‘I endeavoured,’ he writes, ‘to apply some critical tests. The first was a few children’s alphabet letters picked up at random and

sealed up by me in the presence of Professor Carey Foster a month or so previously. This box I now handed to Phinuit, and asked him what was inside without telling him at the same time that no one knew, and requested him to do his best.'

(To prevent confusion to the non-spiritualist reader it may be advisable to explain that when he handed it to Phinuit there was no Phinuit visible, he put it into the corporal hand of Mrs. Piper whom Phinuit was supposed to control.)

'He,' Sir Oliver continues, 'immediately asked for a pencil, and holding the box to Mrs. Piper's forehead and shaking it a little at intervals as if to disentangle the contents and bring them more clearly before him, wrote down some letters on a slip of cardboard. I thanked him and next morning for better security asked him to try again. He did so and wrote down just the same letters even to the extent of saying in which way they faced in the box.'

'The letters written down,' Sir Oliver confesses, 'were all wrong but two. The conclusion of the experiment was utterly negative. The letters had not been read.'

Now this was a crucial test; yet the utter failure of Phinuit or Mrs. Piper to decipher the letters, and the false statement that he (or she) could see them in the box, does not weaken Sir Oliver's faith in both, though he adds with amazing *naïveté*, 'It is an experiment I want to repeat though Phinuit doesn't care much for this kind of thing.'

The control appears to have other peculiarities. Sir Oliver writes:

'Phinuit, as will be seen, always professed himself to be a spirit communicating with spirits, and he used to say that he remembered their messages for a few minutes after entering into the medium and then became confused. He was not, however, able to depart when his budget for facts was empty. There seemed to be some irresponsible letting off energy which must continue until the original impulse was lost in incoherence.'

This theory must be exceedingly convenient for Mrs. Piper.

The conclusive answer to Sir Oliver's experiments and arguments is the fact that professed muscle readers, like Mr. Irving Bishop and Mr. Stuart Cumberland have performed by normal means marvels far more wonderful than his thought-readers and far more inexplicable—until they were explained.

I remember some forty years ago thought-reading was a favourite drawing-room amusement. The game was played by

the percipient, who had been out of the room, finding some object which the agent had hidden. Contact was allowed; the agent took the percipient by the shoulder and concentrated on the object, which was almost invariably discovered, though there was no reason to doubt the good faith of the performers. I myself on more than one occasion took part as percipient and as agent. As agent I felt a gentle almost impalpable pressure which grew stronger as I reacted against it, tending towards the object hidden; while as percipient I applied consciously the same pressure which the other agent had unconsciously applied. When you were brought face up to a wall there was little trouble finding 'the pin hidden in the wall-paper.' Indeed we carried our experiments a step further than Sir Oliver Lodge and proved that thought could be transferred to an inanimate object. A gold ring was suspended by a silk thread in an empty glass. It was insisted as most important that the ring should be pure gold and the thread pure silk. The performer was enjoined to keep his hand perfectly steady and concentrate his thoughts on the hour. It is impossible to keep the hand perfectly steady; the ring began to tremble. The thought of the operator was 'reverberating' through the string to the gold. The vibration grew stronger and stronger till the hour was tinkled upon the glass. Could anything be more 'veridical' than this?

About the same period there flourished a famous wizard named Professor Heller whose wonderful performances I had more than once the pleasure of witnessing. Professor Heller sat blindfold on a platform at the top of a long room. Madame Heller went down amongst the audience, any one of whom handed her some object, which, in answer to her brief question 'What is it?' or 'What do I hold?' or words to the same effect, Professor Heller accurately described.

On one occasion he described an old gold watch of mine, over a hundred years old, even to the crest of a wild boar faintly engraved on the back.

The public sought in vain for an explanation of those marvellous feats of thought-reading till some years later the Professor explained them in a magazine article. The trick was accomplished by a most ingenious code of signals between his wife and himself.

I need not enter into the details of the achievements in thought-reading of Mr. Irving Bishop and Mr. Stuart Cumberland which so amazed the public. Let one famous experiment suffice. Mr.

Gladstone thought of a sum of three figures, and Mr. Cumberland without touch wrote the figures down accurately. As he was writing, Mr. Gladstone in his mind changed the final figure, and Mr. Cumberland detected the change. All this the percipient confesses he accomplished merely by close observation. Surely none of the experiments of Sir Oliver Lodge and the young ladies are to be compared with this achievement.

Incidentally, Mr. Cumberland in his book gives an amusing description of his detection of many professed thought-readers, and of the manner in which their tricks were accomplished. The most ingenious seems to be watching the top of the writer's pencil, as the trained deaf and dumb watch the lips of the speaker to catch the words as they are formed. So much for telepathy; even spiritualists admit, in theory at least, that the supernatural explanation must be abandoned if a normal can be found.

The Psychical Research Society has devoted a very large part of its proceedings to the examination of alleged apparitions of which thousands are recorded. An initial difficulty here meets the investigators. Ghosts wear costumes, and even the faith of a spiritualist cannot accept the ghost of a suit of clothes. But an explanation has been found. It is set out in detail by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, and is, I believe, accepted by Professor Barrett and Sir Oliver Lodge. The apparition, it is admitted, has no objective existence, it is merely a picture cast on the mental retina of the observer. In other words it is an hallucination. The observer sees with his mind what he fancies he sees with his eyes. Delirium tremens patients and mad people are specially favoured with such apparitions. But the question, as I understand it, which intrigues the Psychical Research Society is whether these apparitions, to adopt a spiritualist phrase which Sir Arthur calls 'modern jargon,' are 'veridical' or not, whether they have any existence outside the observer or are conveyed to his mind through the agency of an unincarnate 'control.'

The examples quoted in the proceedings of the Psychical Research Society, as I have said, reach to thousands. It would plainly be impossible to examine even a small proportion in detail. But certain cases are quoted by Professor Barrett which it may fairly be assumed are, in his judgment at least, amongst the most convincing.

'A gentleman of some note shot himself in London in the spring of 1907. It was alleged that he appeared to his god-daughter in

Paris and detailed the manner of his death.' No motive is suggested for the revelation of those details which her family were anxious to have kept from the child. It is permissible to suggest that a letter surreptitiously delivered to the girl, surely a not impossible occurrence, would supply a normal explanation of the marvel.

The next case quoted by Professor Barrett deals with a grandmother who 'though eighty-three was very active and fond of a joke.' The evidence of the Rev. Matthew Frost is quoted :

'The first Thursday in April, 1881, while I was sitting at tea with my back to the window and talking with my wife in the usual way, I plainly heard a tap at the window and looking out at the window, I said to my wife, "Why, there's my grandmother," and went to the door but could not see anyone; still feeling that it was my grandmother, and knowing, that though she was eighty-three years of age she was very active and fond of a joke, I went round the house but could not see her.'

The grandmother had died about half an hour before, and the supposed object of the visitation was to remind her reverend grandson of his promise to attend her funeral.

Here, surely, there is a simple normal explanation. The coincidence of the grandmother's death, a very ordinary coincidence, gave an importance to a trivial incident which the reverend gentleman would otherwise have regarded as an illusion and forgotten. There is, moreover, a fatal objection to the apparition theory. A mere picture on the mental retina of the observer could not tap at the window.

One other illustration must suffice.

Mr. Husband writes to Mr. Gurney :

'September 15, 1886. The facts are simply these. I was sleeping in an hotel in Madura early in 1885. It was a bright moonlight night, the windows were open and the blinds up. On opening my eyes I saw a young fellow dressed in flannels standing at the side of my bed and pointing with the first finger of the left hand to the place I was lying in. I lay for some seconds to convince myself of someone being really there. I then sat up and looked at him. I saw his features so plainly that I recognised them in a photograph which was shown me some days afterwards. I asked him what he wanted. He did not speak, but his eyes and hands seemed to tell me I was in his place. As he did not answer I struck him with my fist as I sat up, and as I was going to spring out of bed he

slowly vanished through the door, which was shut, keeping his eyes on me all the time. Upon inquiry I found that the young fellow who appeared to me died in the room I was occupying.'

A Miss Falkner who happened to be in the hotel at the time wrote a confirmatory letter of which only the first few sentences need be quoted:

'The figure which Mr. Husband saw while in Madura was that of a young fellow who died unexpectedly some months previously in the room which Mr. Husband was occupying. Curiously enough Mr. H. had never heard of him or of his death.'

The last sentence shows what rash statements may be made by an honest witness when a ghost story is in question and how cautiously evidence should be weighed. Miss Falkner could not have known of her own knowledge whether Mr. Husband had heard of the young man's death or not. It would be very 'curious' indeed if he had not heard of an incident which would be naturally the talk of the hotel. Assuming he had heard of it and had forgotten or concealed his fore-knowledge as tending to throw doubt or ridicule on his ghost story the whole incident revolves itself into a vivid dream. Believing in the ghost, his recognition of the photo was of course inevitable.

This simple, normal explanation is surely more credible than the preposterous notion that the ghost of a young man should some months after his death unexpectedly appear in a flannel suit to turn an unoffending stranger out of the bed in which he died.

Once upon a time I myself as a boy witnessed an apparition. I was driving on an outside car with my father, who was a doctor, on his way to a patient. The night was pitch dark, the lamps had gone out, and the road ran by the high wall of an old churchyard. Suddenly a white plume floated out over the wall and glided in front of the car about three feet above the ground. As we drove on, it may be a little quicker than before, the ghost kept with us, in front, or behind, on the right side or the left, sometimes it circled the car, but always with a graceful dancing motion, and always at the same distance from the ground. It is a pity I cannot leave the mystery unsolved, but candour compels me to confess that after travelling some miles with the ghostly accompaniment we passed through a small town and by the light of the street lamps we saw a tall black dog with a big white tuft at the tip of his tail. The patient whom my father drove out to attend was dead before we

arrived. She died just about the time the ghostly white plume glided out over the churchyard wall. I cannot help thinking what a splendid record this would have made for the P.R.S. if the black dog had turned off before we reached the town.

I freely accept the statement of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle that many bereaved fathers and mothers and widows, relatives and friends, have been induced to believe that the loved ones they lost in the war have spoken or written to them through the voice or hand of a medium. It seems cruel to attempt to disturb that comforting belief, but if the belief is unfounded, if it is induced by trickery, it is surely advisable that such trickery should be examined and exposed.

The belief of inter-communication with spirits demands a corresponding belief in the good faith and the supernatural powers of mediums. They are inseparably involved and must stand or fall together. If we cannot trust the mediums 'Dr. Phinuit,' 'Rector,' 'Moonstone,' 'Nelly,' 'Biddy' or 'Fida,' we can have no faith in their alleged controls. Spiritualists ignore the fact that the senses offer us no evidence concerning those controls. We have only the word of the medium for their presence or their existence. It is the body and the voice of the medium that are seen and heard, and when the hand of the medium writes or the voice speaks absurdity and falsehood, the medium, not the imaginary control, is responsible.

I have read in the proceedings of the Psychical Research Society and in the books of famous spiritualists a vast amount of stuff, trivial, self-contradictory and absurd that purports to be revelation of spirits, and all I have read strengthens my conviction that the spirits have no part in the performance. It would of course be impossible to examine even a comparatively small proportion of these so-called revelations. Sir Oliver Lodge admits more than a dozen errors in names and family details in two sittings of Mrs. Piper's while she claimed to be inspired by a spirit to whom such details were supposed to be familiar.

It is confessedly hard to prove a negative, but to my thinking such proof is furnished in a crucial test recorded by Sir Oliver.

That test was applied by Mr. Myers, one of the ablest and most enthusiastic of spiritualists. A sealed document had been sent by him to Sir Oliver Lodge some years before his death in the hope that after his death its contents might be given by communication through some medium. Here was indeed a crucial test by which it would seem that Mr. Myers was willing the doctrine should stand

or fall. He implicitly pledged himself that he who alone knew the contents of the document would, *if possible*, after death communicate those contents and so vindicate the spiritualists against the sceptics.

A medium named Mrs. Verrall claimed to have learned through the spirit of Myers a certain phrase at least of the document. Fourteen years after Mr. Myers' death it was opened by Sir Oliver Lodge at a meeting specially summoned of the council of the Psychical Research Society.

'On the envelope being opened,' I quote Sir Oliver, 'it was found that there was no resemblance between its actual contents and what was alleged by the spirit to be contained in it. It has then to be reported that this one experiment completely failed.' But Sir Oliver does not seem to realise that this was a crucial test of spiritualism.

Later on he devotes a chapter to what he calls 'the Myers Controls,' in which the spirit of Myers purports to speak through a number of controls, and speaks so much that he complains he is 'out of breath.' But to Sir Oliver Lodge's question, 'Will you then read what you wrote in the envelope?' the only answer vouchsafed is, 'What envelope—I shall be told.'

Now if the spirit of Myers could 'control' Mrs. Thompson and Mrs. Piper and communicate through their voices with his friends, it cannot be doubted that he would communicate the text or at least the tenor of the document in the sealed envelope which he himself set as the crucial test of his identity. Failure suggests that Mrs. Thompson and Mrs. Piper when they purported to be controlled by Mr. Myers were guilty of deception, or, on the most charitable assumption, were self-deceived. There was no such control. Such failure further proves that the task Mr. Myers set himself was impossible. Is there any reason to suppose that other spirits were more eager or more competent to communicate?

What, on the showing of the spiritualists themselves, has been the progress accomplished, what the results of the prolonged labours of the Psychical Research Society?

On this subject Sir Arthur Conan Doyle is effervescent with enthusiasm. He seems to consider the unimaginable horrors of the late war a cheap price to pay for the advancement of spiritualism, that the Creator Himself deliberately designed the war for its promotion. Let the reader judge if I exaggerate.

'Why,' he demands, 'was this tremendous experience forced

upon mankind? Surely it is a superficial thinker who imagines that the Great Designer of all things has set the whole planet in a ferment that this or that frontier may be moved or a fresh combination formed in the kaleidoscope of nations . . . The shock of the war was meant to rouse us to mental and moral earnestness, to give us the courage to tear away venerable shams and to use the vast revelation which has been so clearly stated and so abundantly proved for all that will examine the proofs with an open mind.'

'Spiritualism,' he exclaims later on, 'is not a new religion, it is far too big for that.' He is enthusiastic about its progress, confident about its future.

'Perfected spiritualism,' he writes, 'will probably bear about the same relation to the spiritualism of 1880 as a locomotive to a bubbling little kettle which heralded the advent of steam.'

In reply it may be fairly argued that if we can trust 'a little book' in which Sir Arthur puts implicit confidence, spiritualism reached its culminating point in the experiments in Professor Crookes' laboratory about half a century ago. It is there recorded that 'a young lady spirit of great beauty, tall, with dark hair and eyes and engaging manners, whose earth name was Katie King, frequently joined a social gathering in Professor Crookes' study, talked freely to the guests, and was particularly attracted by the children.' Other controls are nervous, incoherent and absurd, there was nothing shy or awkward about this charming young spirit; she proclaimed herself 'a materialised spirit whose mission it was to carry the knowledge of immortality to mortals.' No doubt she supplied much valuable information on this all-important question, though it does not appear to have been recorded in the little book to which Sir Arthur refers.

Now, *if* this remarkable story is true (much virtue in that 'if'), there is nothing to equal it in subsequent manifestations. Even the curdling of ectoplasm into the form of live human members, which is the very latest development, is as nothing in comparison. Since the departure of Miss Katie spiritualism has progressed like the crab, backwards.

There is no record of any moral advantage secured by spiritualism, except the conversion of an ill-behaved earthbound spirit by Sir Arthur.

This was 'a noisy entity who frequented an old house and gave much annoyance to the inhabitants.' 'On getting into touch with the spirit,' Sir Arthur endeavoured 'to reason with it and to explain how selfish it was to cause misery to others to

satisfy any feelings of revenge it might have carried over from earth.' 'In the end,' he received 'a very solemn assurance, ticked out at the table, that it would mend its ways.'

Only the irreverent can fail to realise the solemnity of this performance.

It has never been pretended, so far as I know, even by the most devoted spiritualist that any message has 'come across' which in form or substance was of the smallest intrinsic value. No literary work, no valuable information has reached us from the poets and scientists on the other side. The medium, like Gratiano, 'speaks an infinite deal of nothing; his reasons are as two grains of wheat hid in two bushels of chaff: you shall seek all day ere you find them, and when you have them they are not worth the search.' Indeed the comparison is hardly fair to Gratiano.

The value of spiritualism is for the true disciples to be found in the word-pictures afforded of the life beyond the grave. Sir Arthur Conan Doyle is enthusiastic over these revelations. From him we learn, 'there are no rich and no poor, the craftsman may still pursue his craft, but he does it for the joy of his work.' The cobbler, we assume, still sticks to his last, but to make shoes which there are none but spirits to wear can hardly be regarded as an exhilarating occupation. We need not dwell on Sir Arthur's description because he himself tells us, 'of all the accounts that which is most worthy of study are to be found in "Raymond."'

To Sir Oliver Lodge's book, 'Raymond, or Life and Death,' we will then appeal for authentic information concerning the life beyond the grave.

Sir Oliver has published many hundreds of closely printed pages purporting to be messages transmitted directly or through various controls by his son Raymond who was killed during the war. So published they become public property, and I trust I may, without offence to the father's naturally strong feelings on the subject, quote a passage or two from those voluminous revelations made during the sittings with Mrs. Leonard, who purports to be controlled by a little girl named Fida.

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, I may mention in parenthesis, assures us that all the inhabitants on the other side are full grown in the prime of life, about twenty-two years of age. Fida seems to be an exception to the rule. Her extreme youth is evidenced by 'giggles' and 'squeaks,' by her speaking of herself in the third person, by saying 'Yaymond' for Raymond, with an occasional

lapse into the correct name, and by now and then, when it occurs to her, stumbling over a long word, which she can generally pronounce correctly.

The passages quoted are from a prolonged sitting at which Sir Oliver Lodge sat with Mrs. Leonard alone and took a verbatim note.

'Fida,' we read, 'soon arrived, said good evening, jerked about on the chair, and squeaked or chuckled after her manner of indicating pleasure.' (It is important to remember that it was Mrs. Leonard's body that jerked about on the chair and Mrs. Leonard's mouth that squeaked and chuckled and talked, there was no Fida visible or audible.)

Here are some of the things Mrs. Leonard's mouth said of 'Yaymond's' experiences on the other side.

'He says he doesn't want to eat now, but he sees some who do. A chap came over the other day who *would* have a cigar, "that's finished then," he thought. He means he thought they would never be able to provide that, but there are laboratories over here, and they manufacture all sorts of things in them—not like you do out of solid matters, but out of essences and ethers and gasses. It is not the same as on the earth plane, but they were able to manufacture what looked like a cigar. He didn't try one himself, because he didn't care to, but the other chap jumped at it. But when he began to smoke it he didn't think so much of it. He had four altogether, and now he does not look at one.'

This also can be understood, cigars manufactured out of essences, ethers and gasses would be apt to pall on a smoker accustomed to tobacco.

The astral distillers seem to be in the same plight as the Israelites who were required to make bricks without straw. There are convivial spirits, it seems, on the other side. 'Some,' so Fida tells through the lips of Mrs. Leonard, 'call for whiskies and sodas. Don't think I am stretching it (pulling your leg?) when I tell you that they can manufacture even that, but when they have one or two they don't seem to want it.'

Those who first dubbed the department of chemistry 'stinks' builded better than they knew, for we have it from Fida, *via* Mrs. Leonard, that on the other side all things are manufactured very literally out of 'stinks.'

'All the decay that goes on on the earth plane is not lost,'

declares the precocious Fida, 'it doesn't just form manure or dust. Certain vegetable or decayed tissue does form manure or dust for a time, but it gives off an essence or a gas which ascends and which becomes what you call a smell. Everything dead has a smell, if you notice, and I know now that the smell is of actual use because it is from the smell that we are able to produce duplicates of whatever form it had before the smell . . . old rags, Yaymond says (*sotto voce*, "yes, all right, Fida will go back"), cloth decaying and going rotten, different kinds of cloth give different smells, rotten linen smells different to rotten wool. You can understand how all this interests me. Apparently as far as I can gather the rotting wool appears to be used for making things like tweeds on your side. My suit I expect was made from decayed worsted on your side.'

And so on, and so on, for numberless pages.

These passages are not unfair specimens of the messages of Fida, and it makes one sad to think of a man of the superb intellect of Sir Oliver Lodge wasting his precious time in recording such bosh verbatim. Professor Barrett quotes some beautiful lines of Archbishop Trench:

'Where thou hast touched, O wondrous death,  
Where thou hast come between,  
Lo! there for ever perisheth  
The common and the mean.'

The austere solemnity of death is insulted by the puerile drivell about spirits smoking bad cigars, drinking unsatisfactory whisky and soda, and wearing tweed suits manufactured from the smell of rotten wool.

Yet, strange as it may seem, even those vulgar-absurdities cannot overstrain the credulity of the spiritualist. Sir Arthur Conan Doyle is fiercely indignant at the unregenerate who dare to smile at the revelations of Fida.

'Scoffers,' he writes, 'have guffawed over alcohol and tobacco, but if all things were produced it would be a flaw if these were not produced also.'

Such, then, is the hope that spiritualism, through prophets like Fida, holds out to us, 'when we have shuffled off this mortal coil,' such is the revelation, 'bigger than any religion,' in which we are invited to believe and rejoice.

# THE PROVOCATOR.

BY CAPT. W. L. BLENNERHASSETT, D.S.O.

## CHAPTER IV.

IN the hall the first person he noticed was Alexander Michailovich Sondrakov talking to the proprietor.

'How do you do?' said the man of mysterious power and influence. 'How do you do? . . . But I need not ask. . . . You are ill?'

Clearly he was trying to be polite, even more so than in the train. His solicitude and kindness left nothing to be said against him—except that it was a little forced upon one. But he was hideous, fantastically repulsive—at least at first sight.

'I?—Oh, it is nothing!'

But Gregory Dimitrievich was not yet as effective a disguiser of the truth as he fancied. He marvelled how in the train, little by little, he had got used to this face.

The other ordered a drink and made him sit down in the lounge. They were in a corner by themselves.

'You have had a bad experience,' he said, with the assurance of a man who knows all about it.

Gregory nodded mechanically. As far as words were concerned he could find none to answer with.

'You have not found your friend?' inquired the other. . . . Was it on his part a question or a confirmation of fact? . . . Gregory was painfully aware how attentively he watched his countenance—every feature of it. . . . He seemed to read from it whatever it pleased him to know.

'No,' he answered, 'I have not.' He tried to appear firm, but blushed.

'Why not?' retorted the other sharply. 'Did he not live where you thought he did?'

'Yes—that is—no. . . . He was not there. . . . The apartment was ransacked. . . . They—they . . . a girl told me . . . ' He did not know what he was saying.

'Ransacked! . . . By whom? . . . Not the police?'

Gregory felt he had gone too far to draw back. As usual the other was straight on the trail.

'The girl—a girl—said the police had taken him.'

'Tut, tut!' remarked the other, getting up. It looked as if he tried to adjust his trousers or pull down his waistcoat. He was rather neatly turned out. His eyes sparkled.

'What is your cousin's name, may I ask?' He stood there facing him—slim, but tall, his legs taut and his arms hanging forward, tiger-like once again, as if ready to spring on him and grasp him as his prey.

Gregory hesitated. 'Andrei Alexandrovich Godalitski. . . . I have not seen him for years,' he added apologetically, in case—in case there was something wrong.

The other gave a start and flung his head back in genuine surprise. At last there was something, thought Gregory, that Sondrakov had not read from his face.

But he recovered his composure with disconcerting rapidity.

'What, what!' he said and snapped his fingers. He sat down again by his side. An awkward silence ensued though. . . .

'Then I got into a street riot,' remarked Gregory at last, for the sake of saying something, 'and saw the cossacks charge the crowd. . . .'

Involuntarily his hand passed over his brow as if to brush away an impression which lingered.

'A ghastly sight, I dare say!—especially for anyone who is not used to it,' said the other. But he seemed to talk mechanically, for his voice sounded distant. . . . His thoughts were obviously far away.

'I say, who are you?' he asked, turning round suddenly and looking him square in the face.

Gregory turned crimson. His confusion was manifest.

'Not a secret, I suppose?' said the other. 'In any case . . . you can trust me.'

Gregory instinctively looked at him in his turn. The face opposite bore as near as it could a kindly look. He could not see that it was so ugly now. . . . Strange how it affected him!

Whosoever he might be, this Sondrakov, an important man or not, he was imposing by his personality. He had not made his face, after all, but—but brought it with him into the world.

The question he put him—it had to come, sooner or later, inevitably. He could not go on living thus without a name. . . . A name he must have, real or assumed. . . .

'You need not tell me if you don't—trust me,' he heard the other say. He seemed a little hurt.

'No, no,' protested Gregory; 'it is not that, believe me; but . . .'

'No?—then, what?'

'But—but—you will be surprised. . . .'

'I? . . . No! . . . I have seen too much of life.' There was a touch of real, crude bitterness about this last remark which humanly made appeal.

'I,' answered Gregory—'I am——'

But the other slightly raised his arm for a warning. The waiter was approaching with the drinks. On a little silver tray he offered two small glasses of vodka.

'Your health!' said Sondrakov, raising his glass and looking at him.

'And yours!' replied Gregory. The waiter respectfully retired, and Sondrakov, whose eyes seemed to follow him attentively, by a similar movement of the arm indicated that they were again alone.

He drew nearer as if to say: You need not speak louder than you think prudent. Gregory put down his glass, wiped his mouth with his sleeve, and said quickly.

'I—I am known in religion as Father Seraphim.'

The other looked at him in amazement. Did he only pretend not to know, or was he genuinely ignorant? . . . Anyhow Gregory was relieved to think that there at any rate was one who did not know. . . .

'But I have left the Church,' he said—'run away. My real name is Gregory Dimitrievich Kossalnikov.'

'Have you a pass?' asked the other in undertones.

'Yes—my personal papers as a priest.'

'None other?'

'No.'

There was a pause.

'You have reported to the police?'

'Not yet; but——'

'But? . . . There is no but about it,' replied the other—'go you must. . . . Otherwise you are playing with fire, especially at the present moment when they are naturally stricter than usual. . . . Listen! Did you want to see your cousin for that—to ask his advice?'

'Yes—about that in particular and the future generally.'

'That accounts for your looks when you walked in just now,' said Sondrakov, half talking to himself. 'You looked for all the world as if you had seen a ghost,' he chuckled; 'and I dare say you saw one or more in the street riot.' He shrugged his shoulders. 'Now, if you have no other friend, take me. I'll help you.' He got up. 'Come upstairs,' he said softly, 'to your room. We can talk quietly there.'

The two men went up in silence.

When they were inside the room, Sondrakov, half drawing the curtain over the window, sat down by the table.

'You don't know who I am, do you?'

'No,' admitted Gregory.

'Well,' said the other—and he now talked quickly, though low and in a precise, business-like manner—'if it comes to that in life sometimes, and one is in a fix, one must trust in some one. . . . Do you trust me?'

Gregory did not know what to reply.

'Yes,' he said at last, with an effort, but felt it was not convincing either to himself or the other, who, the moment he settled upon a subject in his so-to-speak professional manner, immediately lost all the sympathy he gained in his occasional, rare self-revealings of the human touch. Yet, in actual power, he won the more for his unerring choice of the right word and impressive emphasis.

'You don't take me for a member of the secret police, do you?'

Gregory heard him ask.

'I do not know,' he replied. 'I—I hope not. . . .'

The other smiled. The priest's *naïveté* was irresistible. But he was serious again at once.

'Well,' he said, 'think it over. . . . I *can* only be that—or—what I am.'

Gregory stared at him. 'Then . . . what are you?' he asked in his turn.

'A real revolutionary,' was the reply.

'What is that?' queried the priest confusedly.

'Something you cannot understand—at least not yet . . . perhaps never, though I think one day you may. Someone, in short, who struggles for liberty—for liberty, you understand . . . and that at all costs, by all means and for ever—even unto death.'

There was something terrible in this man's invisible accumulated

reserve of power. He was sincere now—unquestionably sincere. His enunciation of every syllable, his every movement—what were they but the outward evidence of internal worth? . . .

But there was something infinitely more telling even than that in the flashing flame of the light in his eyes which reflected the boundless fanaticism of his Russian soul. . . .

That man—Gregory felt it—was grandiose in his conceptions and demeanour, great despite himself, but not of the build of those who shrink for scruples. . . . That man was capable of anything—of the last meanness and the noblest sacrifice, according to mood and circumstance.

He felt weak before such a man. But he reasoned thus:

‘That face I can never like—it is not fashioned to that end; but—but I can admire it for the sake of the man. . . .’

‘I am not so sure I cannot understand already,’ he remarked at last in his soft voice.

The other pointed his finger at him: ‘That street riot’—but he gave a forced laugh—‘has it told on you? That charge on the unarmed? . . . Has it?’

Gregory thought he detected a note of triumph. In spite of himself he nodded. But he was wrong.

‘Noo,’ said the other, shrugging his shoulders, ‘what of it? What have you seen as yet? Don’t harbour illusions. These are only impressions—nerves. . . .’

Gregory had to admit to himself that that was so.

‘It is because you are weak yet—confess it,’ pursued Sondrakov, again reading his thoughts; ‘if once you are, if ever you get, stronger—you go deeper.’

There was a pause.

‘However,’ continued the other, ‘about your pass. It is too late to-day, but to-morrow morning early you must go to the police. Give your real name without fear—you have to for one thing, there being too little time to do otherwise.’

He seemed to think for a moment, but resumed:

‘No; a substitute passport, you see, would not do. I could give you one, of course, but the chances are that they have tracked you down already. . . . Not that it matters, depend on it—they are much too busy now. . . .’ Again he appeared lost in thought.

An amused expression stole over his face.

‘I dare say you had visions of your ceremonial expulsion from

your Church, your successor in the sight of the congregation striking you on the cheek; then, perhaps, of the Holy Synod arraigning you and having you secretly dispatched to Siberia in the ordinary way. . . .

Gregory tried to protest, but the other interrupted.

'Perhaps it is true that you would not have minded, but I doubt it. . . . For you are weak as yet and could not go to Siberia with the pride in you with which I could; but, though it may come to that yet, since this is the common lot of us all who do not agree—unless, of course, it is the gallows, which does not apply in your case, for believe me they are not going to do—they cannot do—anything to you . . . for the time being . . .'

Gregory was more frightened than ever. This man was indeed a Job's comforter.

'Don't be afraid,' commanded the other; 'fear generates evil: confidence holds it at bay. What must come will come. That's all.'

Kismet again!

There was a long pause, followed by a heart-to-heart talk.

Gradually becoming more natural and calmer in his speech as in his outlook, the other enlightened him. From the first moment, he admitted, that he had seen the priest in the railway carriage he had guessed that there was something wrong. Perhaps the attitude of the military at Svanka junction had furnished him with the first clue. In any case, Gregory's whole demeanour throughout the journey had steadily confirmed his impressions to the extent even that not only he himself, but also Alexander Alexandrovich Belinski, his student friend, and 'one of us heart and soul,' had long thought that they were talking to a fellow-revolutionary travelling in disguise and acting his part.

'Of course, in the end we knew about—how matters stood.'

'How?' asked Gregory.

'You are not a great actor before the Lord,' retorted the other, laughing as he paraphrased biblical parlance in semi-blasphemy, 'but you were obviously genuine as far as it goes.'

'What do you mean by "as far as it goes"?'

'You were, I mean, obviously not one of us, but only someone who had run away on his own for some real or imaginary offence.'

'Surely I have committed a real offence.'

'Yes . . . perhaps,' said Sondrakov. Again he shrugged his

shoulders contemptuously. 'We all think that when we first break with the established order of society. It is strange, but the lips of us all smack of the aftertaste of Christianity, even though we have discarded it.'

Gregory tried to explain his position. He had only broken with the Church; he was far from breaking on that account with Christian belief—nothing was further from his intentions. . . .

But the other interrupted. 'That is as you wish,' he said, 'and not my concern. Maintain yourself in your half-way house as long as you can. But let us concentrate on matters of immediate importance.'

He arranged that to-morrow a young man, very discreet and 'one of us,' would wait for him outside the door in a sledge punctually at nine o'clock, show him round to the police station, and leave him. . . . Gregory Dimitrievich was to say exactly what was true, and give the street riot as an excuse for the slight delay. That would meet the case.

'Now I must leave you,' he said, 'for I have work to do. Rest a little, for you are tired, and sup with us this evening at nine o'clock.'

'Where?'

'Here,' was the rejoinder, 'in No. 107 on the top floor—for these are "our" headquarters. Good-bye.'

He was by the door.

'Mind you call me Alexander Michailovich,' he said, 'for your friend I shall endeavour to prove myself, if I am allowed to.' He bowed.

'We will drink friendship,' replied the other, 'and you shall call me Gregory Dimitrievich. . . . I am afraid I shall have to come like this.' He alluded to his attire.

The other laughed. 'Rather! It will create quite a stir; but they are all friends, you know. . . .'

Softly opening the door, he slipped out and closed it noiselessly.

What a strange friend! What a mysterious new life! mused the ex-priest, no longer aware that he excused himself for wearing the robes of office of which not long ago he had been proud. Nor was he shocked now at the mockery of others. . . .

Truly, life flowed fast.

All that mattered now was to get some rest.

Never in his life had he lived through such stirring times—

never witnessed events that make up history. Never, also, had he meditated less or thought so little or so confusedly.

Curiosity and pride overbore both the instinct that he was treading dangerous paths and the knowledge that his new friends really had nothing in common with him. The habit of years was stifled; he neither prayed nor gave thanks for his deliverance from danger, but proudly contemplated his arm scarred by the *nagarka*. . . .

Then he fell asleep on the sofa.

## CHAPTER V.

HE was roused from his slumbers by a young man he had never seen before. 'It is gone nine o'clock,' he said; 'they are waiting for you upstairs.'

Hastily Gregory pulled himself together and followed the youth. He was shown into a handsomely furnished room—a little narrow, but longish. By the far window in front of the large drawn curtain stood a group of men conversing; at their right was a long, low sofa on which reclined two ladies—one middle-aged, the other young. Near the door on his left, before a piano, sat a tall, slender young girl who stopped playing the instant he entered.

The first he recognised was the tall, slim, pale-faced young student whose acquaintance he had made in the train. He knew now his name to be Alexander Alexandrovich Belinski. Very carefully groomed, he wore dark trousers and a black velvet dinner jacket, leaving open in front a soft, spotless white shirt. Round a stiff, starched collar was wound a broad black silken tie neatly knotted below the chin into one big bow held together by a golden tie pin surmounted by a turquoise. In the dim light of the big hanging lamp he did not look so pale as in the daytime, and his dark hair interspersed with silvery white was the more becoming for being brushed smooth, though one large rebel lock, soft and wavy, still strayed upon his high forehead.

The priest went to greet his host, Alexander Michailovich Sondrakov, who turned round to welcome him.

'Sorry to disturb your dreams,' said the host pleasantly, 'but supper is ready and the ladies are determined to enjoy your company.'

He introduced him to the ladies seated on the sofa.

'Allow me, Maria Antonovna Bourlakova—Gregory Dimitrievich Kossalnikov.'

'This is my best and most esteemed friend,' he commented, turning to Gregory. 'We all love her dearly.'

The middle-aged lady tendered her hand. A little awkwardly, Gregory Dimitrievich seized it and bowed.

'And this is Anna Charitonovna Klembovskaia,' proceeded his host, turning to the younger one.

Like the other lady by her side she was dressed in black, but not so elaborately. While the middle-aged lady wore a low dress, but covered her shoulders with a handsome silken shawl, the younger one had a high dress. Her big round black eyes viewed the stranger with obvious curiosity. For some reason she broke into smiles.

Was she laughing at him? thought Gregory. Unquestionably, but kindly. He could forgive, conscious as he was how little he fitted into the assembly.

The young woman was far from pretty with her sallow countenance and her upper lip showing a slight moustache which would have more readily befitted a youth than anyone of her sex. Yet, this notwithstanding, she was attractive, intensely womanly in the suppleness of her movements, in the melodious drawl of her voice.

'The young lady, my pensive friend,' remarked his host banteringly, 'comes from Moscow, which accounts for all the charm you and we see in her. Yet you must not stare at her like this: firstly, because in the long run it might put her out of countenance; secondly, because I have to introduce you to many more, and our supper is likely to get cold.'

This criticism was received with loud, good-natured laughter by all but Gregory himself, who felt ill at ease.

'This,' his host continued, 'is our beloved Miss Holmes—an Englishwoman and an honoured guest.'

Gregory beheld a young lady, clad in a simple grey, modest dress, standing by the left of the window curtain. He had not noticed her before, and bowed the more deferentially as she was the first of her nation he had ever beheld. Little could she guess, as she nodded stiffly, smiled and extended her hand, that to this simple rustic she was an object of supreme curiosity, as one of the mysterious people who live on a far-away minute island, wedded

to the sea, from which—save for what Russia owns in power and in land—they dominate or try to dominate the world.

However, his host allowed him no time for profound meditation, but unceremoniously moved him round to the opposite side of the room where stood the young girl who had been playing the piano when he came in.

'Jadviga Alexandrovna Oushakova,' said Sondrakov.

Gregory bowed to the tall girl with fair hair and blue eyes, the youngest and handsomest of them all. Never in his life had he beheld so beautiful a woman.

Then he was introduced to several other ladies and the men one by one, but, bewildered, remembered none except the student Belinski who had shocked him so much on the railway journey but now appeared so utterly different, subdued and orderly.

He had scarcely been introduced all round before the white doors by the side of the piano were thrown open and a waiter announced that supper was ready.

The ladies leading the way, the men followed, Gregory, too shy to enter by himself, being convoyed by his host.

Subsequently Gregory was to remember less of this famous supper party, which was to be a landmark in his life, than of many another event of merely transitory import. One of the reasons for this may have been that he was already tired when he arrived, wherefore the fumes of the wine possibly told on him sooner than they would have done normally, or else—and indeed more likely—that he could never subsequently reconstitute his frame of mind on that occasion, for if his animal nature was drunk with wine, his soul was even more drunk with pride and a levity utterly unnatural to his character.

Therefore all that he remembered of that evening was that he partook of a sumptuous repast such as he had imagined was the privilege only of the Tsar and his grand dukes, and that, determined to be no rustic laughing-stock to his new friends, he entered into the spirit of the company in which he found himself with the daring of a newcomer.

Till that evening he had never, socially speaking, been among strange women, or rather among ladies of the great capital, since such he fancied them to be. As they sat down and the middle-aged but handsome Maria Antonovna Bourlakova, seated next to the host, removed her silken shawl, he beheld for the first time

in his life the bared shoulders of a woman in evening dress. With amazement he viewed the opulence of her neck bordered by a row of massive pale-blue turquoises set in gold, beheld her bosom heaving and falling under her low dress, and observed the look of her large, intelligent eyes fixed on Alexander Michailovich Sondrakov, round whose lips played the smile of love discreetly returned.

He himself sat between Anna Charitonovna Klembovskaia and Jadviga Alexandrovna Oushakova, whom he was already chaffing for having forsaken the piano as he entered the room.

'You seemed quite perturbed at my appearance,' he remarked. 'To you fair ones of the capital I am but a wild man from the woods. But, believe me, I am quite tame.'

To see a woman playing the piano was new to him, for the peasant girls could not do it, and he had had time to admire her white hands.

'Ready to be tamed, you mean,' remarked the beautiful girl with the golden hair, looking at him kindly out of her blue eyes. 'You must admit your appearance is unusual. . . .'

Already she was dallying with a small gold-tipped cigarette which her hand raised to her fresh lips and brought down again to the table while she exhaled clean blue smoke which gently floated towards the ceiling.

He looked round. All the other women were smoking too. The steel-eyed English girl at the head of the table was leaning over her neighbour, the student Belinski, who helped her to light up.

He watched the student's expression and the girl's, and wondered. Did she believe in free love too, or only he? No, they seemed to have eyes only for one another. Was not Belinski's arm even now stealthily touching her hand as he pretended to offer his cigarette so that she might light hers from it? He had allowed the match to burn out while he stared at her.

Strange! Here women and men were making love to one another openly. How charming! Yet . . . in the street near by thundered the revolution. . . .

'I only . . . wanted to say,' he whispered absentmindedly, as he turned round towards his fair neighbour, 'that my appearance . . . you must not mind. . . . It is the relic of a past . . . I have abandoned.'

'We know—I know,' replied the girl and laughed. Her bosom heaved as she sighed and blew away the smoke.

'We know—I know' lingered in Gregory's ear. What had he said?

'Why do you sigh?' he asked. 'What have you to sigh for?'

'Oh, thoughts,' and Jadviga laughed. The merry notes echoed and re-echoed in Gregory's heart; never had he listened to such a siren tone before. She seemed so delightfully natural, so refined. He stared at her and admired her thick fair eyebrows and the long lashes of her small, luminous eyes.

He had never observed a woman so closely, he thought.

'... You see nobody loves me,' she said, pouting her lips after the smoke. 'Or... what is that?' She moved her head very near him and looked at him naughtily. 'Because nobody loves poor me,' she repeated, with simulated petulance.

'But, I... do,' said Gregory Dimitrievich. She seemed very near. . . . He wanted to . . . but drew back terror-struck. She flung her head back also, but with a slight expression of disappointment flitting over her face.

'Already,' she cried, and broke out into peals of laughter.

It seemed forced. . . .

'Your health, Batoushka!' remarked the dark Anna Charitonovna Klembovskaia banteringly. 'You must have eyes for me too—for I love you.'

She spoke with a little air of assumed conviction, smiling softly.

Gregory raised his glass, let it clink with hers, and gulped down the burning vodka.

She looked at him the while, her countenance betraying her amusement mingled with surprise.

'Quick work!' she commented, pointing to the empty glass.

Gregory cast a quick glance round the table. At the far end the student Belinski's lips met those of the steel-eyed English-woman, and opposite him his host's arm strayed over the bare massive shoulders of the Bourlakova, who laughed as she looked at him and he at her.

'Already?' he heard Jadviga Alexandrovna say, and turned towards her. 'But you are flirting with us both,' she remarked reproachfully, with her head coming very near him again and her eyes looking at him with a curious light flickering within them. 'Aren't you?'

She was close to him, and her lips seemed to pout again though there was no smoke. . . .

He wanted to say something, but, not knowing what he was doing, kissed her and started back.

So did she, and blushed.

He felt as if he had made a fool of himself, but she was not angry. Why had he started back so quickly ?

But her laughing face sought him again and, seizing her, he embraced her, long and tenderly. . . .

He observed her closing her eyes and trembling under his touch. Suddenly she broke away.

Gregory sat back in his chair, his eyes sparkling and his spirit excited by the fumes of the alcohol, the tobacco and . . . the woman.

He encountered the glance of his host, who, having kissed the Bourlakova, broke away from her too.

'How are you getting on ?' he heard him ask—'not so badly, it would seem.'

He was conscious that he was blushing, was annoyed with himself over it, heard the distant-sounding peals of laughter of the fair girl on his right, and tried to say something, but could not.

'It is only I who am left in the cold,' shouted Anna Charitovna across the table at his host.

Alexander Michailovich was in the act of pushing a little silver case of cigarettes across the table, and Gregory was about to take one, seeing that his previous refusal had left him the only non-smoker in the room, and he now felt in mood to do and dare all. But the host's hand stopped and, pointing his finger at him in merry anger, he exclaimed :

'No, Gregory Dimitrievich, you shall not have a cigarette before you have squared your accounts with the young lady on your left. She wants a kiss from you too.'

Gregory looked round at her. She seemed to protest in a half-hearted sort of manner. So he got up and caught hold of her, but she yielded readily enough and tendered her sensuous lips.

He stood up and held her in his arms, passionate and wild ; yet, sincere as he was, he thought of the fair-haired girl. The dark one appeared to notice it.

'But he loves her !' she cried, and laughed.

As he resumed his seat, the fair girl was complaining.

'He has not treated me as well as that. . . .'

But he got up and so did she, and she fell into his arms and he held her . . . and forgot everything.

When Gregory sat down again, and the fair girl by his side, he was the cynosure of all eyes round the table, men no less than women. None laughed at him now.

'Indeed thou art getting on well,' cried his host; 'thou hast the energy of a lifetime pent up in thee. What it is to be young!'

He addressed him thus for the first time in the second person, because he himself was getting slightly intoxicated.

'Never mind; this to thy health,' he continued, standing up and raising his glass, 'and mayest thou soon be one of us!'

Everybody rose. They raised their glasses: 'The pope and the golden girl.'

Gregory was not in a mood to be shocked at anything or notice a contradiction of terms or a joke at his expense. Slowly he staggered to his feet, and making the round of the table clinked his glass with everybody's and kissed all the men as well as all the women.

But to his host he went up last and, encouraged by his kindness, asked him to drink friendship, formally and ceremoniously.

Without a moment's hesitation Alexander Michailovich Sondrakov stood up facing him. The two men lifted their well-filled glasses with their right hand, and intertwining their arms, emptied their glasses, then let them drop on the floor, where they crashed to pieces. Thereupon, after solemnly embracing each other and shaking hands, they parted and went back to their own places.

It was only then that the real supper began, all that went before having been but a preliminary trifling with the vodka, the caviare, the smoked salmon, the radishes and pickles and God knows how many things as mere appetisers.

But from Gregory's point of view, it all came to the same thing, since he paid his homage only to the fair girl who—he doubted not—found in him the first man she had ever loved.

Anna Charitonovna Klembovskaia gave up the competition and amused herself with another man. Thus all went merrily and nothing seemed amiss, save that Gregory's thinking powers became more and more bemused as time went on.

He barely noticed that his student acquaintance of the train

journey, Belinski, and the English Miss 'Golmes'—as her real name 'Holmes' was pronounced—left together early in the evening. A little argumentative and not altogether aware of the fact that this was not his own party, he remonstrated with them, but the host quieted him with a significant whisper which intimated that they left 'on business.'

'What business?' retorted Gregory boisterously.

'Hush!' said the host gravely; 'thou art not one of us yet, but it is in the sacred cause of the revolution, and may be one day thou mayst know, admire and do, even as they.'

A momentary silence ensued and they left. The host and one or two of the men saw them out, speaking in undertones, but upon their return the joyful feast resumed, turning slowly, but steadily, into a veritable orgy. The gaiety of the women was animated by alcohol, and they smoked and danced, Jadviga playing the piano divinely according to the little Gregory knew of it. Indeed she possessed a good deal of talent, and her white delicate fingers touched the piano softly and sympathetically. Then she sang, and first Anna Charitonovna joined in, then by degrees the whole company, including the man who had fallen in love with her that evening.

Gregory felt at his ease, for his debonair manner and unexpected success with the women raised him in the esteem of all. He, too, thought highly of himself and remembered but dimly how a few short hours ago he had been the laughing-stock of them all, the wild man of the woods shown off for fun—which now he no longer was. Only, as he got steadily more inebriated, he got freer and easier in his manner and dared risky jokes to amuse even the massive and much *décolletée* Bourlakova, monopolised as she was by the host.

It was not Alexander Michailovich, however, who was jealous—but the fair girl. This added to the amusement of all concerned, though the party showed a tendency to break up, there being enough nooks and corners in the two adjoining rooms, thrown open and dimly lit by candles, to accommodate all couples who sought solitude.

But as it is often said that a pure man who loses his reason resorts to language utterly opposed to his normal train of thought, so Gregory joined in loose songs and hazardous refrains, and grew cruder and coarser as the evening proceeded, until he lost himself in that lurid parlance of imprecation which Russia has inherited

from Asia. To a man like him inebriation—and in such company—meant the loss of his reason.

Meantime he went on, forgetting more and more where he was and what he was doing, till the fair-haired girl, beguiling him like the siren she was, calmed him and gave him cold water to drink. Then she made love to him and dragged him away to his room.

What had become of the others he neither knew nor cared, nor did he remember how he got to the floor below. He had eyes only for Jadviga and she only for him. . . .

Here they spent the rest of the night, till in the early morning hours sleep overcame them both—a heavy curtain of oblivion falling upon a scene dimly remembered.

He could not hear the sound of commotion in the house, the shrieks of the women upstairs, the tramp of feet in the corridor, the knock at his door. . . . Jadviga alone awoke, opened the door, and then started back with a shriek: 'The police! the police!'

He did not remember how he was dragged away, his mad drunken scuffle, his imprecations and curses. All that happened was that some men, seeing he could not walk, carried him downstairs into the open and put him in a sleigh and drove off with him.

But he was asleep and knew nothing, not even that Jadviga Alexandrovna Oushakova was no longer by his side.

## CHAPTER VI.

He only came to his senses next day to find himself in a place where he had never been—a kind of cell to all intents and purposes, judging by the low and dingy look of the narrow space and the one small window barred with iron rods overlooking a narrow courtyard.

Stunned and dazed, his head swirling and his limbs aching, he raised himself from the long wooden bench on which he had been asleep and asked himself where he was.

He looked up and around him, and beheld opposite the silent motionless figure of Alexander Michailovich Sondrakov sitting up against the wall and staring at him.

He wore his attire of yesterday evening, his dark trousers and black velvet jacket, with a big dashing tie round his neck, much like the student's, only not so ornate and not so tidily knotted,

especially not now. His hair was disordered and his soft white shirt-front disarranged and torn, laying bare his chest. He looked as if he had come out of a fight in which he had got the worst of it. He was hatefully ugly.

The moment he observed Gregory's returning consciousness he put his finger to his mouth and, coming over, whispered in his ear.

'Not a word—for this place is overheard—'

'How? Why? Where are we?' stammered Gregory.

'In the hands of the police,' replied the other, speaking louder. 'You will have a chance at last of reporting in proper form without being shown the way.' He chuckled.

'In the hands of the police?' repeated Gregory, terror-struck. 'Why? What for?' The other's mirth seemed to him out of place, decidedly.

But Alexander Michailovich Sondrakov for once was phlegmatic. Slowly he drew near again and, speaking very low, said:

'Caught, my friend—at last. There would appear to have been a traitor about the house. May be that Belinski's attempt failed.'

'What attempt?—Who is Belinski?'

'Shtt—not so loud—for goodness' sake! Places such as these are tapped by the microphone or overheard in some other way—Shtt!'

Outside, a man's footsteps became audible. They came very near and then sounded more distant.

'It is only the sentry,' said Sondrakov; 'don't worry. You know nothing about the affair—the attempt, I mean—so—so you are all right. You have absolutely nothing to fear.'

He sat down opposite and took out a cigarette, which he lit. He offered Gregory one, but he declined, saying he had never smoked in his life.

'We heard the same story last night,' replied the other, 'yet you smoked one.' He laughed, though not too loudly.

Last night?—Slowly it dawned upon Gregory what had happened—all he had done—and he felt ashamed; never, never had he been so sorry for himself. How could he? . . .

He felt mortified to the last degree. Before his eyes rose the beloved figure of the dead Maroussia—the pure virtuous Maroussia; and then he saw Jadviga, saw her divine beauty, heard her voice—then Maroussia's, then both intermingled, incoherently,

confusedly, mutually contradictory like the two currents in his soul.

'It is all very well,' he said, 'but what if they find me out?'

'Don't be afraid,' retorted the other; 'you have no reason to be. They are too busy to worry as to whether you are a priest or not—for the time being. They only will want to know why you have not reported, and you tell them you intended to do so this morning. You need only speak the truth. . . .'

The truth! thought Gregory—the truth! Nothing more? Why, he was afraid to own it to himself.

'The truth—nothing more,' murmured the other. 'You understand?'

Gregory suddenly remembered that he and this hateful man in front of him had kissed one another last night, emptied their glasses, sworn friendship and called each other 'thou.' . . .

Oh, how he hated the hideous brute! Yet, how much more himself!

'Be a man,' whispered the other, 'or at all events try to be one. You look so terrified that anyone might think you saw visions. If anyone here had reason to fear, it would be I.'

The last words were uttered in so low a voice that they were barely audible. Gregory scanned his bosom friend of yesterday who was sitting there, still and rigid. But why was he acting thus?—for his restless oval eyes, blacker to-day even than when he saw them first in the early morning light of the wayside station, moved restlessly to and fro.

'Where are we?' he asked at last.

'In the ground cellars of Petropávlovsk fortress,' replied the other.

Gregory jumped up, suddenly sobered.

'Shtt—not so much noise!' warned the other. 'It is used in times like these for special cases and men they want to execute quickly and secretly.'

Gregory turned as white as a sheet.

'It does not apply to you—you coward!' said Sondrakov contemptuously; 'but to me—they are going to execute me to-night.'

'You?'

'Undoubtedly. They know too much about me—or rather even part information is enough. In any case, in these days they don't inquire much. They have their chance—during the revolution.'

There was a long silence. Gregory trembled from head to foot. He dared not ask more.

'Don't see visions, I tell you,' cried the other angrily. 'There are none to see—there is no God to bring them.'

Visions indeed! No, he could have none. The figure of Maroussia his sinful eye could not behold. Only Jadviga 'the temptress.' He shuddered.

'No God,' he murmured, 'to bring them? . . . !'

'I, at all events, believe in none,' hissed the other, 'and I am less frightened in sight of death than you are without the least cause. You are a good, weak man—admit that Jadviga is a fine girl?'

'Jadviga?'

'Noo!' He shrugged his shoulders. 'What is this hypocrisy? Why pretend that this is the first time you ever heard of her?'

'I am not pretending—I'm trying to recollect—I have sinned with her.'

The other laughed, but not loudly. 'Lived, you mean, yesterday evening, perhaps for the first time in your life—admit it!'

' . . . And for the last time,' replied Gregory.

'Rubbish—don't try to make me believe that! You have your life before you—mine this time to-morrow lies behind me. You have experienced what it is to enjoy life, and though you do not feel like it just now—and pardonably enough—you will enjoy it again. Then think of me and cherish it for my sake.'

'You seem very certain of the fact that they will kill you?'

'Quite certain.'

'"They," I take it, meaning what you call the Tsarists?'

'Yes.'

'And they will send me to Siberia?'

'No.'

'Why not? Don't you want me to know the truth?'

'Because they are too busy to bother about a small offence.'

'But mine is far from being—'

'In your own eyes, no doubt, you are a very grave case—seeing how filled you are with your own importance—and in normal times, I grant you, it might be severely dealt with; but not now—now only affairs of state—'

'Such as yours?—you seem just as conceited.'

'Such as mine—I know what I am talking about.'

Again steps were audible without. Again they died away in the corridor. The sentry on his round!

'By the by,' remarked Alexander Michailovich Sondrakov, 'if you are confronted with any of us in the court, or in one of the corridors or yards, don't recognise us—not at first sight anyhow—or recollect everything only dimly. In this way you have an easy task, for to explain how you met me and came to dine with me is not difficult without inventing anything. You need not have known that I held advanced views.'

Gregory nodded.

'As it is, you know nothing—so you can give nothing away,' he continued, speaking quite loud; and then added softly, 'but if you did, or testified so as to make it worse for us, one of us who survive would assassinate you.'

Gregory gave a start.

'This only for a warning,' remarked the other casually; 'and also this: Should you accidentally meet your cousin Andrei Alexandrovich Godalitski, in your own interest as much as his, you had best not know him either—'

'I don't even know where he is!'

'Why, where can he be but here—that is, if he is still alive. He was one of us, you know. It was for this reason I took you up,' he added, 'and whoever else it was, it was not he who gave us away—'

Outside, voices became audible and the steps of men coming down the corridor. Hurriedly Alexander Michailovich broke away and settled in his corner.

Someone approached the door, peered through the small shutter, and was heard to say, 'Here he is!'

Then the lock turned noisily and a uniformed man entered, attended by two soldiers.

'Art thou Gregory Dimitrievich Kossalnikov, known in religion as Father Seraphim?' he asked.

'I am—he,' replied the dishevelled-looking priest, rising from his bench.

'Then follow me,' said the official in uniform. 'They want to interrogate thee.'

Without a word, Gregory picked up his hat and went towards the door.

'Good-bye,' said Alexander Michailovich Sondrakov. 'We may not meet again—'

But the other was too frightened—too scared to take the least notice. Whatever happened, he determined to make a clean

breast of it and say everything he knew—but perhaps that was not much.

Still, he must break with this life of sin and adventure upon which he had ventured. He was not made for it.

Heavily the door fell to behind him, while the key turned harshly in the lock. They made sure it was fastened and Alexander Michailovich alone.

They even closed the little shutter lest he should see as far as the corridor.

Then they marched off in silence.

*(To be continued.)*

